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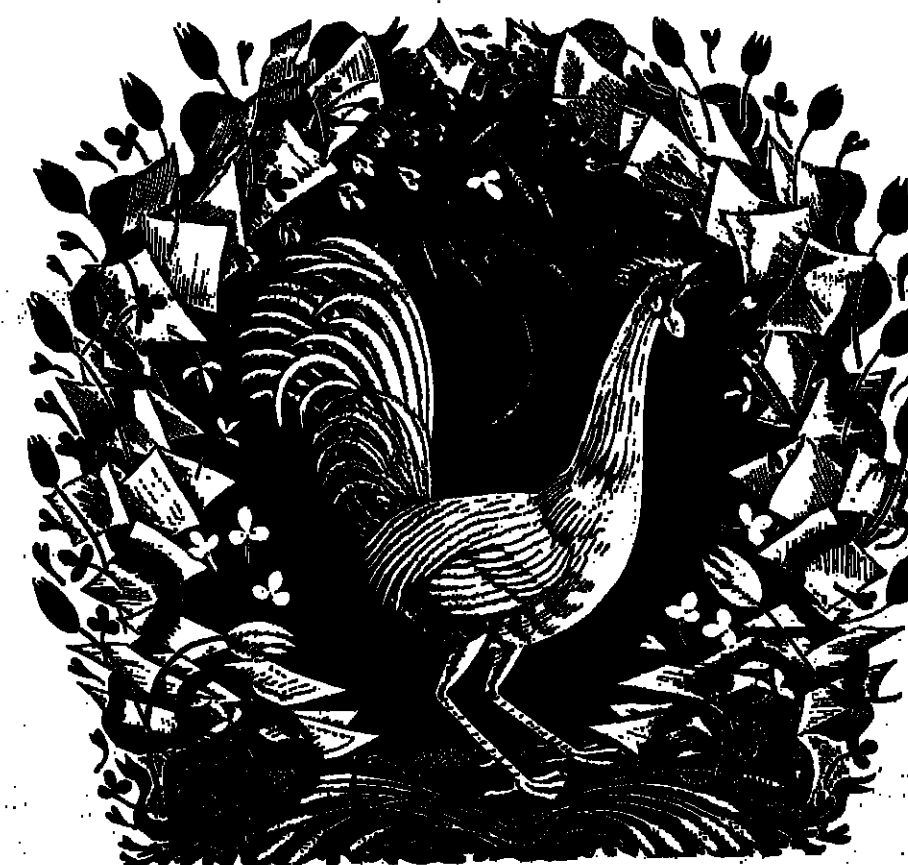
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THE TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT

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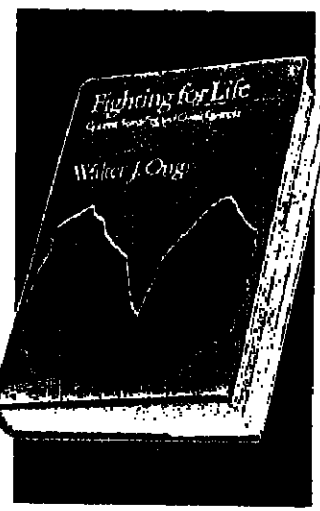
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The institutions of insanity

By Robert Brown

ANDREW SCULL (Editor):
Madhouses, Mad-Doctors and Madmen
The Social History of Psychiatry in the Victorian Era
384pp. Athlone Press. £16.
0 485 30002 8

KLAUS DOERNER:
Madmen and the Bourgeoisie
A Social History of Insanity and Psychiatry
361pp. Oxford: Basil Blackwell. £16.
0 631 10181 0

In 1837 an author wrote in the *North American Review* that "no fact relating to insanity appears better established, than the general certainty of curing it in its early stage". At much the same time (1844) the proprietor of the High Beach Insane Asylum in England was telling a Commission of Lunacy on a Mr Thomas Campbell "that one of the symptoms of Campbell's insanity was that he objected to woolen trousers, and preferred corduroy because they were better for walking". These two quotations are drawn from the essays on Victorian psychiatry collected by Andrew Scull from some dozen British and American historians. When the two quotations are brought face to face they immediately generate the complex and somewhat disturbing question with which these writers deal: "who in Victorian psychiatry was curing what - and why?"

It is clear enough who was keeping watch on the mentally afflicted. Throughout the eighteenth century, and well into the nineteenth, it was clergymen, jailors, relatives, private mad-house proprietors, hospital attendants unwillingly or unwittingly, and the keepers of borough asylums and workhouses. Bethlehem (Bedlam) Hospital, the oldest institution in England for the custody of the mentally ill, was noted for the business enterprise of its custodians, but they did not pretend to offer either refuge, good care, or cure. That was left to such people as William Battie, one of the founders, and first physician, of St Luke's Hospital, London, which began accepting pauper madmen for treatment in 1751. Within a few years Battie was training medical students there for psychiatric work, and from that time onward medical interest in the management of the insane grew steadily. Battie's *Treatise on Madness*, perhaps the first textbook on psychiatry, appeared in 1758; sixteen years later parliament had placed the registration and inspection of private madhouses, and commitment to them, effectively under the control of the College of Physicians. This transference of the management of the mentally disturbed - shown by the intervention of the state, the increasing use of asylums, and the growing legal power of medical experts - culminated in the act of 1845 which compelled local governments to provide asylums for pauper lunatics.

All these changes, and many more, are summarized in passing by Scull in his paper on the social history of Victorian psychiatry, and by William Bynum, Jr, writing on rationales for the therapy of the period. The increasing centralization of power of treatment in the medical profession and in the asylums, public and private, is also referred to by Nancy Tomes in her account of early American construction and management of asylums. She usefully reminds us that the "advocates had to convince the public that insanity was a curable disease, best treated in a mental hospital". But given the commendable emphasis by these authors on such a striking change of social policy, it is even more striking that no writer in this volume offers us any real explanation of this remarkable shift in public attitude. Why, from the mid-eighteenth century onward, did treatment of the mentally disturbed suddenly become of interest to medical practitioners? No doubt once they became interested, they had means available to them of first consolidating, and then extending, their area of concern. But what produced their concern? Historians of psychiatry may find the answer too obvious, too hard, too long, or simply not their current

business. However, it is important to the serious reader, for whom this book is intended, to learn which answer he is to be given.

In the past twenty years there has grown up a considerable literature on Victorian mental therapy as it was practised in Britain and America. One reason why the literature has become so extensive is that the disorders under discussion were of many different, and sometimes quite unrelated, kinds. While it is now stressed that the terms "insanity", "lunacy", and "madness" have a legal use rather than a medical one, for a good part of the nineteenth century they were used as though they were the names of a specific illness concerning whose treatment honest experts could, unfortunately, disagree. In practice, the word "insane" came

weep over his little rabbits, which he had not seen for six weeks". Tutill's diagnosis was supported by a Dr Frampton who, on December 7, thought that Davies was insane "because he would not admit himself to have been insane on the eighth of August". Under these circumstances it is not surprising that in 1845 there was founded the Alleged Lunatic's Friend Society. It had much work to do.

The question "which groups were the beneficiaries - or victims - of Victorian mental therapy?" is considered by a number of Scull's contributors. It is known that pauper women formed the largest single group: in 1871, there were 1,182 female lunatics for every 1,000 certified men, and for every 1,000 certified male paupers there were 1,242 female lunatics. Sho-

reason private asylums were more likely than public ones to be guilty of wrongful confinement. The truth of this matter is made more obscure by the almost complete lack of attention given by the Victorians to the questions whether paupers or working-class people were being wrongfully confined. Settling this matter will require considerably more evidence and argument than is given here.

Discussions of Victorian diagnosis and treatment, taken generously from the largest part of *Madhouses, Mad-Doctors and Madmen*. Bynum points out that by the early nineteenth century three views of the nature of insanity were current: that it was caused by a physical ailment; that it was caused by a mental ailment distinct from the mental symptoms produced

menaced, beaten, starved, and chained to a stake, the civilizing influence of phrenology is easy to appreciate.

When it came to the point, however, Victorian physicians had no evidence that their certified patients were suffering from brain disease or, indeed, any other bodily ailment. What they were suffering from was described by advocates of psychological therapy as derangements of the will, the passions, and the sensations. The causes were mental, they said, and therefore the treatment had, in part, to be moral. In "Moral Treatment Reconsidered" Scull asks why, for most of the eighteenth century, madmen were treated as beasts whereas at its end such benign institutions as the Quakers' York Retreat began to appear. His answer is that on the earlier view madness was thought to consist almost wholly in loss of reason - the faculty believed to be necessary for human status. When a person lost his reason he lost the essential characteristic of a human being, and thus his claim to be treated as one. Blows, whipping, purges, chains, and forced vomiting were designed to induce fear, to subjugate mania, to coerce the insane into rationality. The "rupture with the past" came, Scull thinks, with industrialization and its need for a self-disciplined work force, one which took advantage of the new economic opportunities for upward mobility by internalizing a new set of responses to work and its financial rewards and punishments. Harsh management of the insane was to be replaced by re-education which would fit them for a competitive position in the industrial market-place.

Whatever the merits of this account, it does have the advantage of laying weight, as Foucault has, on an important change in European ideas about mental disorder. One part of the change seems to have been a new conception of which abilities were actually lost in cases of serious irrationality and which capacities were retained. Another part was that it came to be realized that the distinction between rationality and irrationality, and thus between madness and sanity, was neither clear-cut nor rigid. In consequence, the requirements for being granted human status were broadened: madness upon one subject was no longer taken to be a sign of utter mental disintegration. This, in turn, affected the standards of treatment both for animals and for people: if people could be partly mad and still be human, then they could not be wholly treated as beasts.

Scull thinks that the eighteenth-century belief in the complete continuity between all forms of animal life - the Great Chain of Being - helped to support the earlier and harsher view of insanity, for the belief in continuity allowed mental disorder to be blamed on the animal features of its victims. But this conclusion fits poorly with Scull's own emphasis on the eighteenth-century adherence to the notion of there being a rigid distinction between madness and sanity. It is more plausible to suggest that belief in the continuous gradation of animal life encouraged the notion that human rationality was also a matter of degree. However, neither this view nor Scull's can explain why the Great Chain of Being, a very old idea, should suddenly, at the end of the eighteenth century, and almost at the end of its own life, be thought to apply to human powers of rationality.

In the end, Victorian psychiatric theory was paralyzed by asking the wrong questions, and Victorian public therapy was swamped by the flood of pauper patients who were channelled into the asylums by beneficent legislation. These twin processes are well documented here. Since "certifiable lunacy" was not the name of a specific set of mental ailments, it could not be investigated either medically or psychologically. If required sociological investigation. Because scientific knowledge about mental disorder was lacking, moral assessment was the common substitute. Michael Clark, in his paper on the rejection by British psychiatrists of psychological methods, refers pointedly to the "dangerous



Three illustrations from Andrew Scull's book. Two are engravings from Jean Etienne Dominique Esquirol's *Des Maladies Mentales* (Paris, 1838); above, left, a Swiss soldier aged twenty-seven, admitted to the Charenton in 1827, who, following a dispute with officers and his demotion, became first wildly delirious and then fell into a state of withdrawal and inactivity; and, top right, a woman in her late thirties one of Esquirol's patients at the Salpêtrière in 1813. The engraving below, right, comes from The Philadelphia Medical Museum (1811) and shows the chair invented by Benjamin Rush for the Pennsylvania Hospital which "binds and confines every part of the body". Rush comments, "in 24, 32, 48, and in some cases in 4 hours, the most refractory patients have been composed. I have called it a 'Traquillizer'."

walter's essay, from which these figures are taken, goes on to note that female inmates lived longer than male inmates, and also remained longer. In English public asylums and hospitals. Since there were more pauper women in England than pauper men, and since there is apparently some evidence that paupers in general were more readily certified than members of the paying classes, Showalter concludes that the public asylums helped to create their own majority populations of female incurables.

The point which remains at issue is whether the standards for certifying paupers were actually lower than those for certifying middle-class people. Showalter simply refers to "a wide range of contemporary observers" who said so. But McCandless quotes both *The Times* and a Select Committee on Lunacy as arguing, in mid-century, that it was in the interest of public asylums "to release patients at the earliest opportunity so as to relieve the ratepayers of a financial burden". On the other hand, private asylums were operated for profit. It was in their owners' financial interest to keep their institutions well filled, and for that

by a physical disease; that it was "caused by either physical disease or mental aberrations". Most British doctors naturally favoured the first view, and Roger Coote, in his persuasive paper on the historical importance of phrenology in the development of psychiatric theory, indicates why phrenology became so popular with the medical profession in the period 1825-45. Phrenology's founder, F. J. Gall, claimed that insanity was a physical disease of the brain but that the disorder could be either structural or functional. This seemed to explain why post-mortems did not always reveal organic lesions in the brains of certified patients. Moreover, by correlating each sort of psychological disturbance with a particular area (an organ) of the brain, phrenologists could give a pseudo-explanation of a somatic kind for every mental disorder. Treatment consisted in strengthening certain useful organs of the brain by benevolent care so as to suppress the troublesome ones. One of the happier effects of the theory was that it offered a scientific justification of a humane regimen, when we recall that as a mental patient even George III was immobilized;

moral irresponsibility" and "moral depravity" which those physicians ascribed to the mentally ill. It was only natural, therefore, that many therapists, as McCandless notes, "seemed to be constantly trying to enlarge the boundaries of insanity" so as to equate it with unconventional behaviour - behaviour which was to be corrected, in part, by homiletic techniques.

The tone of didactic moralizing in Victorian physicians was rather fierce. In discussing the Victorian boundary between criminal responsibility and insanity, Roger Smith quotes a remark made by a Dr Winslow about a woman who confessed both to adultery and to the murder of her six children but who successfully pleaded insanity: "If she were insane, her mental derangement was the result of the immoral life she had led for years, and as her insanity was self-created, the gollows ought to have claimed her for its victim". The need for self-control, and hence the need to be responsible for one's own mental state, were deeply ingrained in Victorian morality. The doctors' compulsion to blame the patients for falling ill - for succumbing to sin - largely accounts for the psychiatrists' interest both in reforming their clients' characters and in urging them to repent.

This highly informative and sobering book makes it obvious that most Victorian misanthropes of the mentally disturbed were due to false beliefs about the nature of mental disorders and to a willingness to treat its victims as non-human. This certainly demonstrates the general importance of our having true beliefs; but it also raises questions which the volume's contributors deal with only in passing: Why do so many Victorian psychiatrists now seem to us crazier than their patients? Did dealing in such ignorance with lunatics drive the doctors mad? Had they no responsibility at all for their false beliefs?

Klaus Doerner's *Madmen and the Bourgeoisie*, first published in German in 1969, bears the intellectual scars of its period. More ambitious in scope than the volume edited by Scull, this book summarizes, and meditates on, the history of British, French, and German psychiatry from the early eighteenth to the mid-nineteenth centuries. Lurking in the wings of this discussion is a shadowy assumption, which periodically comes on stage for a brief bow to the author's applause: it is that the rise of psychiatric medicine in the years 1750-85 was somehow connected with the onset of the Industrial Revolution, the rise of free contractual labour, and the increased social visibility of the poor, the mad, and those who were both. The connection, Doerner seems to be saying, is that with the arrival of industrialization, the insane were regarded as economically, and hence socially, useless. Their irrational and unpredictable behaviour was seen as disruptive of the efficiency of a modern bourgeoisie state, yet their labour, like that of other social outcasts, was badly needed for the expansion of industrial production and for use in the colonial armed forces. The state tried to integrate these outcasts into the economy by creating special institutions in which psychiatric medicine would be used to reform the deviants and protect the public. This particular combination of social coercion and social welfare was one way, Doerner thinks, in which the bourgeoisie state successfully extended its claims to have legitimate public authority.

If this, in outline, is Doerner's argument - and the talking-computer nature of the translation undermines any confidence in this matter - then there is little in his book to persuade us that his argument, which is also that of Foucault, is correct. No evidence is given that the pauper lunatics became more socially visible with the development of an industrial market economy at the end of the eighteenth century, although the claim is made repeatedly. Nor is any reason given why at that time the insane should have been thought to be more economically useless and objectionable than previously. If we had grounds for thinking the proposition to be true, it would be easy to invent some reasons in its favour. But Doerner's platitudinous attitude toward his own claims makes this unnecessary. Why, to take another example, should we believe that the bourgeoisie state needed "the labour of the pauper lunatics"? True, the number under public care depended entirely on social policy, but the nineteenth-century commitment of an increasingly large number of people to asylums at

public expense was more a matter of putting them into live storage than it was of integrating them into factories and armies. Elsewhere Doerner refers to the more familiar suggestion "that after the transition from the agrarian extended family to the bourgeois small family, the latter could not possibly take care of an insane (retarded, ill, old) member, and therefore special institutions proliferated". He does not reject this suggestion, but acceptance of it would drastically alter his labour-theory of institutionalization.

For an English-speaking audience, Doerner's account of the early history of German psychiatry makes available a considerable amount of unfamiliar, and sometimes bizarre, speculations on madness and its therapy. Out of the hodge-podge of somatic medicine, proto-psychiatry, idealist philosophy, and Christian theology which constituted psychiatric thought in nineteenth-century Germany, emerge figures such as Hayner, the humanitarian reformer, who nevertheless devised a hollow running-wheel in which the patient could bring himself back to his senses and the real world by physical exhaustion. Doerner, rather characteristically, takes this invention to be "renewed proof that identity, the dominant theme of the time, was not merely an epistemological problem but increasingly motivated by the bourgeois quest for social identity." What he means, apparently, is that Hayner's wheel is an example of the psychiatric reformers' attempt to give insane people a "social identity" and to bring them under the discipline of an industrializing state. If the use of the wheel will serve to support this conclusion, then so will the use of public mockery, purges, beatings, and all other forms of therapeutic terror. But what distinguishes these pre-industrial techniques from that of Hayner? How do we know whether any of them was being used to bring its victims "under the discipline of an industrializing state"? Could we have asked the therapist whether he had that in mind?

Doerner's account does bring out the constant association in German therapy, as in that of Victorian England and America, between psychiatric treatment and moral re-education. At various places he makes the Marxist point that because large sections of the educated German bourgeoisie were excluded from economic and political power, the combination of political repression and an uncompromising moral code led them to internalize their powerlessness as a sense of personal inadequacy for which they held themselves to be individually responsible. When this guilt-laden attitude expressed itself in treatment of the mentally disturbed, Doerner says, it authorized every coercive means so that morality could "emerge victorious and break through all external barriers and resistance and their internal correlates, the passions". There is an interesting conjecture here which is struggling to survive, but like so much else in Doerner's study, it is left to make its own way.

Meanwhile the author, or at least his translator, presses on to now conclusions with the aid of dangerously strengthened metaphors. "One of the consequences," we discover, "of putting idealism on its feet" apart from its liberating aspect, was the failure of the natural-scientific and social-scientific 'feet' to find a common rhythm within the medium of the liberal division of labour, and to this day they tend to march to their own drummer."

In *Boundary and Space - An Introduction to the work of D. W. Winnicott* (1969, London: H. Karnak (Books) Ltd. £9.00 9507746 7 4): the two authors, Madeleine Davis and David Wallbridge, drawing on both published and unpublished material, present the main themes of Winnicott's theory of personal development and show how he contributed to an understanding of the significance of infancy in the whole life of human beings. In addition, they reveal how personal and professional influences affected his own development as paediatrician, child analyst, teacher and theorist. The book is divided under three main headings: The Background, The Theory of Emotional Development, and Boundary and Space, and a list of sources can be found in the reference section at the end.



A photographer for many years before establishing his reputation as a painter, Robert Rauschenberg has recently once more interested himself in the medium. Robert Rauschenberg Photographs (about 140 unnumbered pages, Thames and Hudson, £12.95, 0 500 54075 6) contains examples from both periods, including that reproduced above, taken in Boston, Massachusetts, during 1979-80.

Domestic diagnostics

By Peter Sedgwick

DAVID LOCKER: (Editor)
Symptoms and Illness
The Cognitive Organisation of Disorder
193pp, Tavistock. £12.
0 422 77460 0

During a year's investigation spanning parts of 1974 and 1975, David Locker conducted and recorded a series of interviews on personal health matters with six women who had been asked to keep "health diaries" about the symptoms and remedies characteristic of them and their families during the course of the study. Apart from some rather compressed theoretical observations (owing much to the ethnomethodological tradition of sociological enquiry) which are placed at the beginning and the end of the book, *Symptoms and Illness* consists of Dr Locker's commentaries upon a large number of verbatim extracts from these women's accounts of how they recognized and dealt with illness in themselves and the other members of their households.

Put this simply, the exercise might seem just one more feat of low-level observation in the spirit of modest empiricism that has infused much social research in Britain. But what makes *Symptoms and Illness* an interesting work is the dense elaboration of the various explanatory and therapeutic strategies offered by the respondents and picked up in Locker's very full glosses on the transcripts. There may be some doubt as to how representative of the generality of British wives and mothers this small sample is: Locker is curiously silent on the fact that all the main breadwinners in these homes come from the professional and managerial classes. But the types of competence in managing both family illnesses and medical agencies that are discussed at length here are likely to be quite widely dispersed in modern households. Consumers of our contemporary health-services operate with a good deal of lay knowledge about the expected course of illness and the extent to which it is proper at any given point in an illness to hand the problem over to a professional outside the home. While such lay knowledge is rather unsystematized and pragmatic, it is also (from the evidence of Locker's respondents) extensive and complex, covering psychiatric and physical disorders, the complaints of childhood and the limitations of advancing years.

Locker is thus able to list seven different types of causal explanation which are provided in these accounts

of family or personal health-problems. We have, from these relatively uneducated respondents who must have picked up their aetiological knowledge from advice-columns in the popular press or else from other lay practitioners of health-care, a great wealth of causal agencies ranging from the environmental (eg a change in the wind as a precipitant of hay-fever) to the biochemical (a germ or virus), and from the familial (whether inherited or experienced) to the stage of the sufferer's life (adolescence, adolescence). In the case of "stage of life" explanations, it seems that these function much of the time as filters in the patient's or relative's decision not to call in the doctor. Illnesses which are attributable simply to the putative patient's age-status tend to get re-defined as being not quite illnesses after all, at least if he or she is on the elderly side. (Conversely, if the sufferer is a young child, symptoms may be accorded the priority of a special urgency, and the fact of the patient's tenderness may be mentioned to the GP's receptionist to ensure that the news of the complaint will be taken seriously by her employer.)

What Locker calls the "interpretive" work of his respondents appears to play a very considerable part in the sequence of actions and reactions which lead to a medical referral. The thermometer is only one element, and perhaps a dispensable one, in the modern household's multifarious apparatus of lay diagnosis, which consists in the main of talk and observation conducted on the candidate-patient's own premises, as well as of a whole mass of theories about illnesses and their causes which are current among the ordinary public. For Locker it is not simply the world of mental illness which is the subject of a thorough social constitution (as the case of the anti-psychiatrists and "labelling" theorists would have us believe), but illness in general, be it mental, physical or mixed in character. In line with the more sustained theoretical arguments offered by Robert Dingwall in his searching monograph *Aspects of Illness* (published in 1976), the present text encourages us to see illness as an everyday social construction, to be understood by reference to human meanings rather than to the impersonal causes favoured by many professional diagnosticians and therapists.

It is a pity that, having exposed the futility of the appeal to a biological level of symptom-description which supposedly operates as a source of "raw" data about the patient innocent of any "interpretive" ordering, Locker still finds room for a distinction between "illnesses"

(which are socially constituted) and "diseases" (which are a basic biological entity preceding the social constitution into illness). He claims that "what is labelled disease has an existence independent of interpretive activity, while illness does not". This sharp differentiation between the biological or organic datum of disease and the social, value-laden construct of illness is not an unfamiliar development in the literature on the logic of pathology. It is argued by, for example, David Morgan, the sociologist who supervised the disquisition on which *Symptoms and Illness* is based, and has become common in recent American theorizing on the nature of illness. The trouble is that "disease" does have a well-founded and distinctive popular use, or set of uses, which overlaps with the connotation of "illness". As the transcripts of Locker's respondents indicate, a good deal of lay interpretation revolves around conceptions of an underlying biological disorder which is seen as responsible for a patient's symptoms. Indeed, the public at large may be said to be excessively inclined towards that reductionist view of the illnesses which sees them as the unambiguous outcome of a pathogen in the body, itself to be combated by the invention of a "magic bullet" type of remedy in the high-technology labs of medical science.

The most disturbing feature of the accounts of ill-health given by Locker's ladies is the degree to which they are permeated by this technologized, disease-ridden vision of sickness, at the expense of any more positive ideas on how they and their families might keep fit and well. What *Symptoms and Illness* blandly calls the "competence" of its witnesses for a patient's symptoms, their illness in the arrangement of their lives seems rather to reflect a profound incompetence, even a fatalism, when it comes to minimizing the chances of falling ill in the first place.

Despite Locker's occasional paeans to the "commonsense understanding" which fortifies the labour of these anxious Penelopes at the unending loom of domestic diagnosis and homely remedy, *Symptoms and Illness* is a useful work which will deserve a place in the basic reading material for the trainee psychologist or social worker. But in the absence of health education in schools and colleges, and with the contrary prevalence of illness-inducing practices fostered by advertising and life-style, common sense is likely to encourage as much misinterpretation of health-problems as interpretation, and thus to rank highly among the social factors contributing to mortality as well as morbidity.

OPERA

Sounds and settings

By Anthony Burgess

EUGENIO MONTALE:
Prime alla Scala
522pp, Milan: Mondadori. L20,000.

It is not necessary for a poet to know about music, but it helps. If Swinburne had not been tone-deaf, he might have realized that it was not within his province to contrive pure patterns of euphony: there was another art that could quite satisfactorily exploit the allure of sound. Johnson, who got on well enough without a liking for music, encouraged his literary successors to regard it as either noise or angels, but certainly incapable of discoursing sense.

The tide turned with Browning. The two great literary productions of 1922, the seminal works of our century (both of which, it may be argued, owe something to Browning), rely heavily on music. There is as much Wagner as Shakespeare in *The Waste Land*, and *Ulysses* showed that the sentence could be the analogue of the musical phrase, the fugue could be imitated, and that the total structure of a novel could learn from sonata form.

James Joyce was a tenor and, had he not been diverted by literature, he might have been a great singer. Eugenio Montale was gifted with a fine baritone voice, and he might have attained professional status with it if his singing master,

Ernesto Sivori, had not died untimely. He remained a musician and, between 1954 and 1967, contributed regular very well-informed articles on opera to the *Corriere d'Informazione*. There are certain ignoramus who assume that to be Italian is to be musical anyway. To these it must be said that there is no such thing as an Italian. There are, for instance, Neapolitans, who assume, as black drummers with rhythm, that they are naturally endowed with the singing gift, and there are Romans, who make no such claim. Italy is probably less musical than England, and audiences at La Scala, Milan, are regrettably limited in their operatic tastes. If opera, which does not include Wagnerian music drama, is the national art, it is because southern

Italian life is operatic. That Montale, in this collected volume of his musical writings, is nearly always at the opera, and not listening to symphonies or quartets, must not, however, be ascribed to the limitations of Italian musicality; as a singer, and poet, he was naturally interested in a form which used words to a musical end.

It is the regular Scala repertoire that Montale usually witnesses, along with such comparative novelties as the *Abu Hassan* of Weber, *Il convitato di pietra* of Dargomyzhsky and Bellini's *Il pirata*. When an opera is so neglected that a performance becomes a novelty, the fault usually lies in the words. Of the Bellini work he says: "Romani's execrable libretto... seems to have touched the imagination of the composer only in respect of the part of Imogene... the other characters are respectively a baritone and a bass, not a couple of living personages." Montale admits that the libretto of Verdi's *Nabucco* is incomprehensible, but he finds a primordial power in the music. In an article called "Parole in musica" he faces up to the problem of the composer's poetic taste, often severely lacking, admitting the mystery of expressive excellence surviving critical rejection of the words set. "The truth of the matter is that genuine poetry already contains its own music and will not tolerate any other"; it is poetic intention, realized through the musical setting, that comes through despite the banality of the words. Verdi is one of those who "si contentano della situazione espressa in parole" - not the parole themselves.

Lucy Beckett's *Parisfall* commentary immediately reveals itself as being in a different league from the other two. Her interest in the work is intense, and she commands a superbly incisive style. After giving an excellent survey of the sources, relating them at every point to the use Wagner made of them, she produces an analysis of the text which goes far beyond a redundant synopsis, since she casts light on some, though not all, of the bewildering and obscure remarks and incidents in the drama. She is especially illuminating on the scene between Kundry and Parisfall in Act II. Wagner's most taxing stretch of both words and music - indeed, from the spectator's point of view, preposterously demanding. The musical structure of the work is dealt with in masterly fashion by Arnold Whittall, even if his final claim, that "Wagner's unrepresented and unrepresented innovations as a form-builder... ultimately, the core of his greatness and the basis of his most profound and continuing influence" is far too limiting in its stress on his musical supremacy.

Having provided an adequate stage-history, Lucy Beckett considers "the nature of the judgments made by the most interesting minds that have addressed themselves to the subject", including Hanslick, Kufferath, Howard, Thomas Mann, Robert Gutman, Carl Dahlhaus and, I am bound to say, myself. Surely Hanslick and Gutman could have been omitted without loss. And it is possible to feel that her selective quotations and summaries are sometimes tendentious. But she succeeds brilliantly in giving an impression of the variety, intensity and depth of the reactions that Wagner's last masterpiece has evoked - and continues to evoke.

What emerges, though, with disconcerting force, is the strength of her own Catholicism and its capacity to deflect her judgment, and even her understanding, on the most straightforward level, of what is in the work. Thus she takes Gurnemann's words as he anoints Parisfall in Act III to be directed to Christ rather than to Parisfall himself, in spite of the fact that such a reading contradicts the sense of the passage and its musical accompaniment (a combination of the Parisfall and the Pape Pool motifs).

It is none the less a piece of strenuously intelligent criticism such as is rarely encountered in dealing with opera, or indeed with any of the arts, and contains some superb perceptions, and an admirable and wholly original account of the strains that are caused in *Parisfall* by Wagner's attempted conflation of pagan and Christian elements. This volume, like its companions, is illustrated, but in vain. The reproductions of performers and productions are so dim and murky that they will be of use only to psychologists still employing Rorschach tests.

Measuring the masterpieces

By Michael Tanner

PATRICIA HOWARD (Editor):
C. W. von Gluck *Orfeo*
143pp.
0 521 22827 1

JULIAN RUSHTON (Editor):
W. A. Mozart *Don Giovanni*
165pp.
0 521 29663 3

LUCY BECKETT (Editor):
Richard Wagner *Parisfall*
163pp.
0 521 29662 5
Cambridge University Press. £9.95 (paperback £3.95) each.

Opera is one of the supreme cultural achievements of the post-Renaissance Western world. Notoriously it is an unstable art-form, with several elements in potential conflict, so that its capacity for reaching supreme artistic heights is constantly being thwarted by successful take-over bids from singers, strait-jacketing librettists, tyrannical producers and other hazards. This applies not only to the writing of operas themselves, but also to their performance. In spite of the heavy odds against it, however, in nearly four centuries it has produced a remarkable number of indestructible masterpieces, many of them with controversial but endlessly fascinating dramatic content, which one would have hoped might lead to a correspondingly substantial amount of stimulating criticism.

The actual situation is, alas, catastrophically disappointing: if one wants to increase one's understanding, and therefore one's love of the greatest works in the genre, one looks very largely in vain. There is an enormous amount written about opera, but it nearly always seems to avoid discussion of the crucial questions. One finds endlessly repeated plot-summaries, accounts of opening-night fiascos followed by triumph, histories of various styles of performance, statistics of success, biographies of singers, speculations about voices which can never be verified - everything except a concentration on why opera, and particular operas, matter. The warmest welcome should therefore be extended in principle to the series of handbooks which has just been inaugurated by the Cambridge University Press. The aim of these books, in the compilation of which the individual authors have been given considerable latitude, is to provide a history of the specific work and its genesis; a detailed account of the plot; a musical analysis of the work or of crucial parts of it; an account of the interpretations it has been given by critics, together with the author's or compiler's own view, if he or she has one; and a bibliography and discography.

Of the first three books in the series one is an almost total failure, relative to the aims just listed: one is a rag-bag which includes good moments; and one is a brilliant and highly original contribution to the subject. The failure is the book compiled by Patricia Howard on Gluck's *Orfeo*. The most interesting question it raises is whether there ought to be a book devoted to every important and even

great, if flawed, work of art - it is characteristically modern, and mistaken, to answer affirmatively. Certainly this book suggests that either more than one of Gluck's works should have been considered, or that, more profitably, it should have dealt with the Orpheus myth, as Joseph Kerman does with brilliant concision, in *Opera as Drama* (nowhere referred to in this book). Patricia Howard's own contributions are dull, and her critical perceptions don't rise above: "In choosing this happy ending, Calzabini was surely intending to replace the baroque solution of Striggio's libretto set by Monteverdi with a modern, rational, enlightened ending". Given the supernatural context of the work, how could such an ending be appropriate? And is it appropriate to say, as Howard does on the next page: "Realistic" yes, realism is what the opera is about. By merely employing the half-fake modern locution "what is about" - she ducks all the serious issues. For the rest, the book contains tiresomely repetitive accounts of the different versions of *Orfeo*, with much the same ground being covered by many writers who give no evidence of having read one another's contributions. The discography, in this as in the other two books, is incomplete, inaccurate and uncritical. Anyone who needs guidance through the thickets of *Orfeo* recordings should read Max Loppert's exemplary article in *Opera on Record*, edited by Alan Blyth.

By contrast, Julian Rushton is the author of most of the book on *Don Giovanni*. An informative chapter by Edward Forman on earlier versions of the story, and a brief chapter by Bernard Williams on "Don Giovanni as an idea", are the only contributions by other hands (apart from the discography). Williams's essay is extraordinarily condensed, sophisticated and suggestive, and has an indigestibly wide range of reference. His attempt to cope with the Commendatore's appearance in the supper-scene is, like *Don Giovanni*, brave but unsuccessful. "He is made of stone", Williams writes, "and he does not come from Heaven (whatever he may say about his diet), but from the churchyard where we first heard him". He continues: "He is a terrible and unforeseen natural consequence of Giovanni's recklessness. He is indeed supernatural, but only in the sense of a realm of causes and effects that lie beyond the natural, not one that brings a new order of guilt and judgment". Granted the intelligibility of the contrast Williams draws, this does much less than justice to the music of this sublimely terrifying scene; and the impressive trio for the masked guests in the Finale of the first act surely points to "a new order of guilt and judgment", a prayer which is answered, at whatever cost to the logic of integrity of the drama, in the Stone Guest's appearance. Nevertheless Williams has given more thought to the opera than Rushton, who seems to be prevented from doing so by the mildness of his musico-dramatic sensibilities. If you can characterize Zerlina's "vorrei a non yorrei" as "merely verbal" resistance, your response to the work is not sharply focused. In fact the twenty pages devoted to the synopsis and the further twenty devoted to the libretto are unnecessary to anyone who has

followed the work with a text or score, and it is supposedly for such "serious opera-goers" that these books have been written, as well as for the "student or scholar". What makes this volume, in spite of a few helpful pointers, depressing and dull reading is the lack of any sense of strong personal response or capacity for raising the crucial critical questions.

As befits a potential Nobel prizewinner already internationally acclaimed, Montale discloses an international musical, and literary, appetite. He praises George Gershwin, suggesting that if ever the United States should produce a genuine national operatic tradition, that same Jacob Gershovitz must be

seen as "il Glinka, l'iniziatore". The libretto of *The Rake's Progress* fascinates him, but, before the triumphant premiere at the Fenice in Venice, he doubts whether its diversity of styles - ranging from *Il Mikado* of Sullivan to *La Terra Desolata* of Eliot - can be matched musically even by Igor Stravinsky. At the performance - at which the composer-conductor bounces like a "burattino di gomma" and has a look of Benedetto Croce doubled over an ancient codex - the libretto seems to lose much of its modernist savour but gains in stylistic coherence. Then he wonders if it is less a matter of style than of technique - entities which Stravinsky likes to confound.

Montale is sympathetic to Walton's *Troilo e Cressida*, but finds the music basically insular, Latin only in its aspirations. He sees Britten's *Giro di Vite* or *Turn of the Screw* at Venice and finds its "atmosfera viziosa" not far distant from that of Graham Greene (he is always ready with a surprising analogy). Gershwin's *An American in Paris* suggests Hearn's *Niebla* to him, to the problem of the composer's poetic taste, often severely lacking, admitting the mystery of expressive excellence surviving critical rejection of the words set. "The truth of the matter is that genuine poetry already contains its own music and will not tolerate any other"; it is poetic intention, realized through the musical setting, that comes through despite the banality of the words. Verdi is one of those who "si contentano della situazione espressa in parole" - not the parole themselves.

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Montale writes a graceful journalistic prose untroubled by musical technicalities. He is not comparable with "Corno di Bassetto" in that he lacks the daring to anatomize the mediocre and is a little too ready to be pleased. He dutifully, against the grain one would think, accepts Wagner but finds few Italian voices able to cope with him. He is urbane, catholic, a delight to read, and it is to be hoped that this exhaustive collection of his *ritratti* will soon find an English translator. Apart from the distinction of its author, the book is an admirable guide to the whole operatic repertoire.

• Anthony Burgess 1981

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347 Madison Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10017

Journeys out of Separateness

By Jennifer Uglow

EUDORA WELTY:
Collected Stories
622pp. Marion Boyars. £15.
0 7145 2728 9

In the *New Yorker* in 1965 Eudora Welty defended "Where Is the Voice Coming From?", an exploration of bigotry in the form of a monologue delivered by the murderer of a civil rights leader, with the words "There is absolutely everything in fiction but a clear answer." Her assertion sums up the cumulative impression left by her stories. They demonstrate such versatility that labels such as "Southern Gothic", "feminine", or "symbolist" seem partial and inadequate. Yet they all share a sense of strangeness, an enigmatic quality which stems both from the author's respect for the secret lives of individuals and from her concern with metaphysical mysteries – the question of where man can look for meaning in the arbitrary and uncaring processes of nature and time.

The edition contains four complete collections, plus two later stories inspired by the turmoil of the 1960s. The arrangement of the original volumes is unchanged – wisely, since each collection has its own shape and coherence. *A Curtain of Green* (1941) contains several stories of the Depression, but is often bitterly funny, with a gallery of characters whose outer grotesqueries won Welty her reputation as a Gothic writer. In *The Wide Net* (1943) the odd individuals remain, but the sardonic resignation gives way to a more romantic exploration of human loneliness and longing. *The Golden Apples* (1949), a cycle of stories with an extraordinary structural and symbolic unity, spanning forty years in a small town, pursues the oppositions of community and individual fulfillment, and the agony that accompanies a visionary openness to life. Finally, *The Bride of the Innisfallen* (1955), dedicated to Elizabeth Bowen, suggests that the acceptance of loneliness can be a condition of the strength required for clear perception and for entry into the world, "the lovely room full of strangers".

Between these collections she also wrote three novels, *The Robber Bridegroom*, *Delta Wedding*, and

The Ponder Heart, and she has since written three more, *Losing Battles*, *One Time*, *One Place* and *Optimist's Daughter*. These, like her stories, are especially remarkable for their depiction of determined women, whose fate rarely corresponds to the stereotypes of female destiny. Yet although highly respected and critically acclaimed, her work has never won the popular readership it deserves. Her writing is immediate and direct; she pins down idiomatic speech with hilarious accuracy, and locates her stories with precise detail in time and place. But the detail itself also provides dense patterns of imagery, and there is perhaps something disconcerting in the way her realism suddenly becomes surreal, just as reality and fantasy continually blur in the minds of her characters.

The creaking pillows smelled like wet stones... The curtains hung almost still, like poured cream, down the windows, but on the table the petals shattered all at once from a bowl of roses.

A hallucinatory vividness colours her picture of the South, which is often presented as a region of dreams, floating in a backwater of time. As Dickey, the Yankee cousin in "Kiss" says, "everybody I knew there lived as if they had never heard of anywhere else, even Jackson." The life and landscape of Mississippi – the hill farms, the sleepy towns, the expanse of the Delta, the luxuriance of the swamp, the old frontier road of the Natchez Trace – provide the subjects of nearly all her stories. Welty clearly understands the city exile's "Longing for that careless, patched land of Mississippi, trees in their rusty wrappers, slowgrown trees taking their time, the lost shambles of old cane, the winter swamp where his own twin brother, he supposed, still hunted." It is, of course, Welty's own country. Born in Jackson in 1909, she has lived there all her life, except for periods of study in Columbus Ohio, at the University of Wisconsin, a course in advertising at Columbia University, New York, and, later, trips to Europe. But, as she and her commentators have often pointed out, she has a measure of detachment, allowing her to escape the burden of guilt and regret for Southern history, since her father came from Ohio, and her mother from West Virginia. And although her early supporters included writers such as Cleanth Brooks, Robert

Perhaps he had even decided that it was a symbol not of happiness with Ellie, but of something else – something which he could have alone, for only himself, in peace, something strange and unlooked for which would come to him...

Much of the elusiveness of the

stories comes from the way Welty allows her characters to retain an inner life, hidden even from the omniscient author. Again this can involve the narrative structure itself. When events are described in the first person ("Why I live at the P.O.", "The Golden Shower", "Where Is the Voice Coming From?") or from the viewpoint of an individual or closely-knit group ("The Petrified Man", "Keela", "The Outcast Indian Maiden", "At the Landing", "The Whole World Knows"), the account may be so coloured by confusion, prejudice, ignorance or emotion that the reader is hard put to find a perspective from which to interpret them or to make moral judgments. Elsewhere the point of consciousness in the story may be a traveller who is in only partial possession of the facts ("The Hitch Hiker" or people wholly deprived of communication, such as deaf-mutes ("The Key", "First Love"), the inarticulate ("A Worn Path", "The Burning") or the insane ("Clytie").

The effect is to emphasize an alienation which the characters continually strive to overcome. They long, as the young girl Nina does in "Moon Lake", to merge the self with that of another, "To slip into them all – to change. To change for a moment into Gertrude, into Miss Gruenwald, into Twosie – into a boy. To have been an orphan." But the possibility of such union is not a real one. The most explicit statement of this preoccupation comes in the story "A Still Moment", in which the evangelist Lorenzo Dow reflects on his horror at Audubon's shooting of a white heron so that he may study its beauty:

He could understand God's giving Separateness first and then giving Love to follow and heal its wonder; but God had reversed this, and given Love first and then Separateness, as though it did not matter to Him which came first. Perhaps it was that God never counted the moments of Time; Lorenzo did that, among his tasks of love. Time did not occur to God. Therefore – did he even know of it? How to explain Time and Separateness back to God, who had never thought of them, who could let the whole world come to grief in a scattering moment?

People adopt different defences against this existential loneliness, and against the ravages of chance, whether mis-timed good fortune ("Flowers for Marjorie") or the accidental death of a beloved ("A Curtain of Green"). Some immerse

themselves in daily life, and in the social rituals which figure repeatedly in these stories – concerts, parties, funerals. The numerous suicides become passive victims, finding comfort in total surrender. Still others try to impose order, through love, through art, through an intense ecstatic moment of vision, or through the "wild reality" of fantasy and dream.

In the volume *The Golden Apples* the forces of love, sexuality, dream and art pull constantly against the small but remorseless demands of small-town life. We encounter a series of artist-wanderers, who, like Orpheus, may be either god or victim, or both. Their attempts to break out of the enchanted frozen existence of their town, Morgana, are enhanced by references to classical myth, Zeus and Danaë, Perseus and Medusa; to the folklore of natural fertility – "Tis the habit of Sir Rabbit, To dance in the wood"; and to archetypal symbols of submergence and rebirth. Above all the stories are permeated by the echoes of Celtic mythology which cluster around Yeats's minstrel, the Wandering Aengus, driven on "Because a fire was in my head" to hunt perpetually for his vision of love.

Like Virgil Rainey, the pianist whose release from the community forms the climax to the cycle, Eudora Welty can convince us that she is in tune with the rain falling not only on "the whole South" but, for all she knew, on the everywhere. Both character and author confront the terror of separateness and find solace in a tradition of the imagination which at once respects and transforms the violence of nature. "They heard through falling rain the running of the horse and bear, the stroke of the leopard, the dragon's trumpet of the swan." The publication of these *Collected Stories* allows us to celebrate the achievement of one of the most entertaining, evocative – and underrated – of American writers.

We should like to inform readers that Gilbert Sorrentino's latest novel *Crystal Vision*, reviewed in the TLS of December 4, will be published in this country by Marion Boyars (£6.95, 0 7145 2759 9) in May. Sorrentino's novel *Abravation of Starlight* will appear in a paperback edition, also from Marion Boyars, at the same time.

Portmanteau fiction from Penguin Books includes William Boyd's *A Good Man in Africa*, which won a Whitbread Literary Award in 1981 and evoked comparison with Kingsley Amis and Tom Sharpe.

Watching and Waiting

Across the screen saxophonists perform a kneeze-up of artificial limbs, but your daughter is too humane for so cruel a view.

Busily colouring in *The World's Animals* she reduces a majestic giraffe to the homeliness of crazy-paving.

You suspend a pair of cherries over her ear, a dangling two-of-spades, lowest card in the grimmest suit.

She strips one with her teeth and offers *The Sacred Heart* bleeding for us all. Promptly ignored with the discovery

of the elephant's useless privilege: to beat upon his grey canvas the imprint of God's finger.

Too soon she will no longer see that double bass player at a silly man dancing with a wooden lady but know him,

sole demented mourner clawing at his young wife's polished coffin. Sufficient unto the day is the sardavak

(coloured purple) and conducting everything with a paintbrush – is Douanier with his music, and just as fast to sleep.

David Sweetman

POETRY

Instinctively inspiring

By Andrew Motion

ROY FULLER:
Fellow Mortals
An Anthology of Animal Verse
274pp. Macdonald and Evans. £9.95.
0 7121 0635 9

Why do we like animals? They are so well known for biting, scratching, gnawing, charging, trespassing, catering, wauling, interrupting, and fouling the footpath that it is sometimes hard to see how their reputation as good companions ever gained any credibility. The ultimate power over them of modern humans is a help, of course, and so is animals' capacity for blind devotion: even the most odious owners can command unwavering adoration from their pets. And in addition, at least since the Romantics, wild life has often been thought to embody inspiring spiritual values. It is not just that birds and beasts exhibit what some people consider an exemplary fidelity to their instincts, but that they can hint at a self-containment and self-fulfilment which is denied to humans. Edward Thomas's "Sedge-Warblers" is about this: the "small brown birds" are described as "Wisely reiterating endlessly / What no man learnt yet, in or out of school."

With the blessing of (and in aid of) the World Wildlife Fund, Roy Fuller has chosen the poems in *Fellow Mortals* at least partly to illustrate the development of these ideas. It is, in spite of its slushy title and whimsical, undistinguished illustrations, an excellently catholic and unpretentious anthology – and, incidentally, the best-selling of modern animal lovers. This has not always been the case. Until the nineteenth century, with a few obvious exceptions like the Duchess of Newcastle's "The Hunting of the Hare", the natural and domesticated life of animals was usually seized upon by poets not for sentimental reasons but because it offered them a chance to demonstrate ingenuity or imaginative reach. Donne's "The Flea" is an unforgettable example, while Milton's catalogue of the animals in *Paradise Lost* is a feat of creation which almost competes with the scale of its subject.

These and other, similar, responses depended to a great extent on a firm sense of human superiority: to expend as much candour as strong feeling on an animal as on a person, they imply, would be unworthy or silly. Even in an epitaph like Harriett's "Upon his Spinnell Tracie" the intricacy of the versification attracts as much attention as the emotion. The element of exercise is unignorable:

Now thou art dead, no eye shall ever see thee
For shape and service, Spanell like to these

This shall my love do, give thy sad death one
Tears, that deserves of me a million.

This kind of detachment becomes much more marked during the eighteenth century. No matter how Gay or Pope, for instance, might admire animals, they dispatch them to perform moralizing functions and to illustrate classical precepts without much attention to their individual natures. And if emotional involvement looks like getting out of hand, it is quickly subjected to irony: "Fair Lady! moderate your grief / A Friend's advice may bring relief / Consider that we 'All must dye / Your Yell – your Dog – your Cat – & I." But this tone of voice is far from being wholly dismissive. The irony operates as a protection against charges of soporificity, but also permits the expression of straightforward truths – and animals' capacity to fill this serious rôle was treated with steadily increasing gravity. Cowper, in this as in so many other respects, prepared the way for the Romantics. His "Epitaph on a Hare" and "The Retired Cat" use pets as the agents of a profound psychological purpose: they convey life lessons far and loneliness. The same is true of "On the Death of Mrs Throckmorton's pussiecat", which is not included in *Fellow Mortals*.

There is a delicately controlling irony throughout this marvellous poem, but as the bird's fate approaches Cowper's own preoccupations are painfully and transparently obvious: Just then, by adverse fate impress'd A dream disturb'd poor Bully's rest; In sleep he seem'd to view A rat, fast-clinging to the cage. And, screaming at the sad prestage. Awoke and found it true.

Where Cowper uses tame pets as a way of identifying his unruly feelings, the Romantics proper enlist all forms of wild and domesticated life to express a wider variety of functions. Nightingales, yellowhammers, butterflies, badgers, ducks and dogs are all credited with the same virtues as cats, sparrows, solitaires and children. Wordsworth, in particular, extols animals with an earnestness which risks becoming ridiculous. His narrative "Fidelity", about a dog and his missing master, is a celebrated instance:

Yes, proof was plain that, since the day When this ill-fated Traveller died, The Dog had watched about the spot, Or by his master's side: How nourished here through such long time

He knows, Who gave that love sublime; And gave that strength of feeling, great Above all human estimate.

The poem is a memorable one, but a milestone, nonetheless, in the history of sentimentality about animals. Wordsworth's gravity seems to have prevented him from realising the implication that the dog survived by eating the master's body.

Much the same sort of go-faced earnestness blights many Victorian animal poems. But it is impossible not to notice, as *Fellow Mortals* succeeds, that the wish to take animals seriously did not altogether prevent genuine love or admiration from mingling with a sense of the subjects' lowliness. Hartley Coleridge makes the point well in his poem "To a Cat": "The world would just the same go round / If I were hang'd and thou wert drowned; / There is one difference, its true, – / Thou dost not know it, and I do." This is substantially the same attitude as one expressed by Hilaire Belloc a hundred years or so later: "The dog is a faithful, intelligent friend, / But his hide is covered with hair" – and the same "mixture of gravity and waggery" has undoubtedly endured into modern times. But Fuller does not give us a chance to appreciate it. He has excluded from his anthology any poet born after 1900, partly because he was "daunted at the prospect of foraging among the work of recent years", partly because "it seemed recent poetry might swamp or blur the poetry of the past", and partly because "qualities such as wit and sophistication, which the moderns are so good at, might detract or divert attention from gentler and more tenuous features in older poetry".

All anthologists have to make rules for themselves, of course, but these seem needlessly defensive. For one thing, the evidence of *Fellow Mortals* shows that the past is resilient enough to look after itself. For another, the revival of interest in animal poetry during the past twenty-odd years represents a significant addition to the genre. Ted Hughes, pre-eminently, has produced a bestiary in which the Wordsworthian tradition has been radically updated. His is nature poetry with an X-certificate – an aggressive reminder of much modern urbanised human life. Apart from anything else, for Fuller to have illustrated the present and connected it with the past would have fulfilled the heart-felt, didactic purpose outlined by the World Wildlife Fund's Director in his Foreword, and persuaded more people to realize that "without animals, without the habitat in which they live and thrive, mankind itself cannot survive".

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 Evans

commentary

Cinderella in the drawing-room

By April FitzLyon

Cendrillon
Cottesloe Theatre

Pauline Viardot's salon opera *Cendrillon*, given a single performance on December 22 by the Intermezzo Ensemble, was more of a Christmas treat for parents than for any but the most sophisticated children; but the children survived – it only lasted an hour – and the parents were enchanted by this elegant and witty musical trifle.

At a Victorian Christmas party the dressing-up box is brought out, and the whole family plays the story of Cinderella – a little opera within a play; there is no more to it than that. The libretto (by the composer) is a model of its kind: succinct, sparse and fast-moving. The music is highly professional, very *fin de siècle* French, with a touch of Massenet and an occasional glint of Offenbach. Each number is a mild and melodious send-up of some operatic convention: the ballad, the coloratura aria, the love duet; and there is even a sextet and a mini ballet. Robert Carson and Peter Evans created a swift-moving and visually attractive production; Maureen Lago was the accomplished pianist; and Christine Collier was a touching and credible Cendrillon.

The singing, it must be admitted, left much to be desired. Pauline Viardot was the most perfectionist of singers and demanded a very high standard from her pupils, for whom *Cendrillon* was written. She would have been disappointed. The father's aria, a real hit tune which stopped the show when it was performed by Opera Rare at Hindleham Hall some years ago, was muffled and made no effect at the Cottesloe Theatre; and there were other imperfections. But the Royal Opera

House could learn something from this company's clear French pronunciation. It was almost impossible to guess what language was used for Covent Garden's recent production of *Alceste*, but the words of *Cendrillon* came over quite clearly.

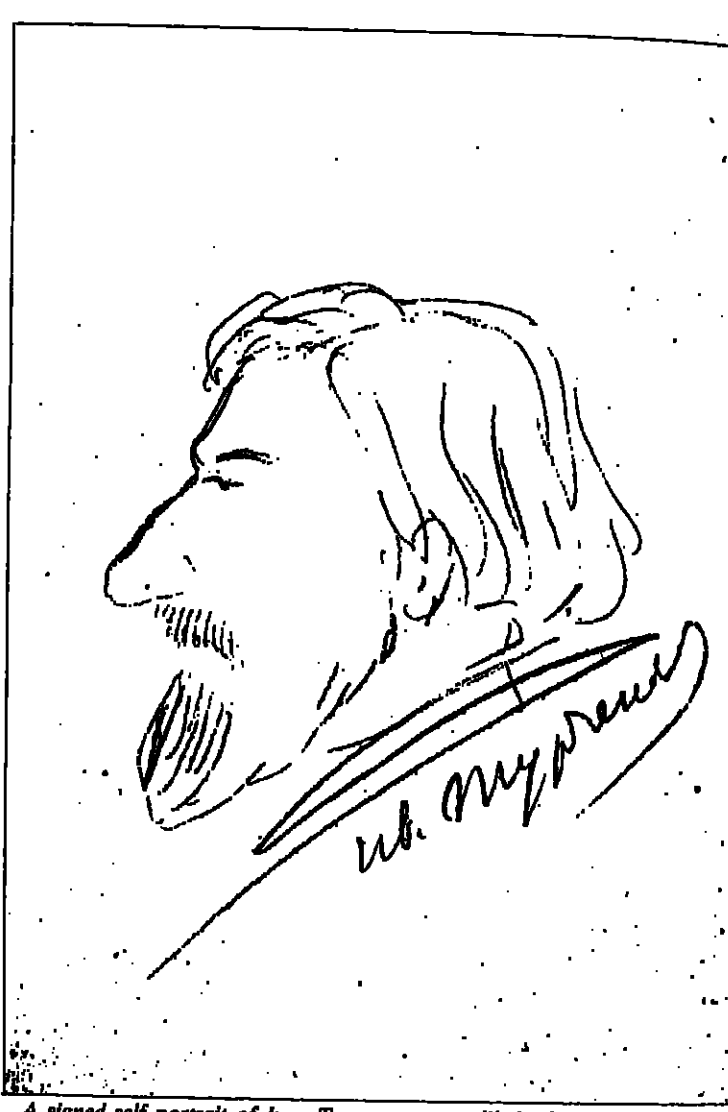
The programme notes stated that Pauline Viardot was the first Dalila in Saint-Saëns's opera. Although she had many first performances to her credit, this was not one of them. It is true that Saint-Saëns wrote the work with her in mind; but she was fifty-six when the opera was finally produced in 1877, and she never performed it on the stage.

In her youth she had been a great interpreter of Rossini's *La cenerentola*; she played it, said Gautier, with a freshness and naïveté which would "have satisfied Perrault himself". In 1904, when she wanted to create a small work for her pupils, she went back to Perrault, and created something essentially French: a fairy story told to the grown-ups with the simplicity of, say, Francis Jammes. In 1904, Pauline was eighty-four and going blind. *Cendrillon* was not her *Pastorale*; most of the music had been composed over thirty years earlier for *Le dernier sorcier* (1869), one of the operettes she wrote in Baden-Baden to Turgenev's libretto. In 1869 the music was right up to date, reflecting – no doubt unconsciously – the spirit of the Second Empire which she so much deplored. By 1904 it had already become something of a period piece.

Like all the Garcia family, Pauline had composed intermittently since her earliest youth; and she was no dilettante, having studied composition with Beethoven's friend Anton Reicha at the Conservatoire. When she retired from the stage Turgenev encouraged her to take up composition again; they wrote several operettes together. These were originally conceived as drawing-room entertainments for students and the Viardot children to perform. Turgenev

himself took part in non-singing roles – it was all good family fun. But, through Liszt and other influential friends, a few professional performances of *Le dernier sorcier* were given at Weimar and Karlsruhe. Although friends such as Clara Schumann were flattering, the operette did not transfer happily from the drawing-room to the theatre, and the libretto, in particular, came in for harsh criticism. The writing of libretto is a very special art; although Turgenev was a great novelist and infatuated with a prima donna, these assets proved insufficient. When, in 1871, the Metropolitan Opera Studio considered performing *Le dernier sorcier* at the Newport (Rhode Island) Festival, the directors found the libretto "totally devoid of either life, charm or dramatic interest". They put on *Cendrillon* instead. One can only be thankful that the operatic collaboration between Turgenev and Brahms – of all people – aborted; a sketch for that libretto was recently sold at Sotheby's.

It is unlikely now that Pauline Viardot's other operettes will ever be revived, for they, too, suffer from Turgenev's libretto; but some of her other compositions might be worthy of performers' attention, and should gladden feminist hearts – the list of female composers of the past is short. Among Pauline Viardot's works there are many songs to words by well-known French, German and Russian poets; many arrangements of Spanish and other folk songs; vocal transcriptions of some of Chopin's mazurkas, which delighted Chopin himself; and a few works for piano and for small instrumental ensembles. And, while we are about it, what about her sister La-Malibran's songs, praised by Berlioz, Schumann and Debussy? These, like *Cendrillon*, look deceptively simple, but performers should beware. When the Garcia sisters sang them to universal acclaim, what really counted was the singers, not the songs.



A signed self-portrait of Ivan Turgenev, most likely drawn in Paris in the late 1870s. From the private papers of Baron Horace de Gunzburg. Turgenev's collaborations with Pauline Viardot are discussed in the review of *Cendrillon* on this page.

Fifty years on . . .

On December 31, 1931, the TLS carried the following review by S. Gaster of *The Gourmets' Almanac* by Allan Ross Macdonald, and Ruth Lowinsky's *Lovely Food: A Cookery*.

... Mrs Lowinsky is more practical leading up from "cuisine bourgeoise" of rather a high order (the range of a young cook, if they [the menus and recipes] are read to her and carefully explained, to the "elaborate, costly and exotic specialties given by London's best restaurants which come at the end of the book." The latter are few, and for most households to be regarded with admiration and awe rather than prejudice: the simpler suggestions are praiseworthy and possible in modest homes. We will take three specimens (all the dishes suggested):

Menu 1. Chosen to create a favourable impression on a father-in-law, who comes prepared to judge you as either the laziest housekeeper in Europe, or the most extravagant, or even a subtle combination of the two. ... Clear mushroom consommé, améti à la tartare, Roman chicken, meringues à la Suisse.

Menu 5. A short theatre dinner for not more than four people. Herrings à la turque, chicken soufflé, iced camembert.

Menu 8. It is useful occasionally to have a cold or semi-cold supper, which the cook can prepare before she goes out, and which can be easily served from a lift, with a parfourmied. ... Spinach soup, hering salad, culetta in aspic, strawberry shortcake.

A noticeboard for "lost quotations" has been set up in the Arts Council's Poetry Library at 9 Long Acre, London WC2. Quotations, preferably of less than ten lines, can be submitted for identification to Jonathan Barker, the Poetry Librarian, and they will be pinned to a noticeboard for a period. Among the quotations currently seeking an author are:

No need of lanterns and in one place lay
Reclined and dull today and yesterday
and
Only our cities bulged
When most of them have dreamed

which you enter the date of your party, the names of your guests and what you gave them to eat and drink; and if the hostess adds what dress she was wearing on the occasion it may save her much thought the next time the same visitors are present, or apprehension that she may be repeating herself. She has also provided an analytical index to her book, in this respect surpassing Mr Macdonald, who only allows us eight blank ruled pages, headed "The Gourmets' Own Index of favoured dishes, each to his own taste." No doubt we should each make our own index to every book we read – there is no better way of mastering its contents – but, alas, life is too short for this counsel of perfection.

Menu 1. Chosen to create a favourable impression on a father-in-law, who comes prepared to judge you as either the laziest housekeeper in Europe, or the most extravagant, or even a subtle combination of the two. ... Clear mushroom consommé, améti à la tartare, Roman chicken, meringues à la Suisse.

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Translated by Derek Cohen. January 1982, £15.75.

The University of Chicago Press

126 Buckingham Palace Road, London SW1W 9SD

commentary

When constabulary duty's to be done

By Richard Combs

Prince of the City
Various cinemas

If there weren't so much of *Prince of the City*, if it didn't work over its subject in such exhaustive detail, there would, strangely enough, be less need to explain what it is. If it were pared down to a more standard feature length (as some of its critics have claimed it could and should be), the psychological connections, the moral and ethical dimensions, would emerge more clearly from the chaotic narrative. As it is, it is not merely long (just short of three hours) but apparently shapeless, not only full of a bewildering number of characters but either wilfully vague or coy about the weight that should be attached to any of them. The impression it gives of boundless realistic detail but not much organization has led to glib verdicts.

Prince of the City has been praised for exposing a serious problem: police corruption, the involvement of members of an élite New York narcotics squad in the sort of activities that they are supposed to be policing. Equally, it has been faulted for not going far enough into the problem – in particular, for cloaking the actions of its lead character,

based on an actual ex-narcotics detective, in more ambiguity than he deserves. The case against the film was recently argued in these terms in *The Guardian*, which assumed, that it was some kind of realistic document, took it to task for including some but not enough detail about the hero's own perfidy, and then delivered the *coup de grâce* by deciding that such a shaggy accumulation of detail was not meaningful anyway.

But a case for the film might begin by pointing out that it is precisely its sense of structure and style that is most impressive. What, in fact, makes it extraordinary is the way it treats its subject – the vicious circle that turns narcotics officers into part of the problem they are dealing with – through a fragmented narrative that seems to be pulling apart in a myriad of incidents while surreptitiously building into a precise trap. The hero, Danny Ciello (Treat Williams), a member of a privileged narcotics squad in the NYPD's Special Investigation Unit, is an interesting case history to the extent that he embodies related contradictions – not to the extent that he matches the baseness of his real-life counterpart.

Early in the film, Danny is persuaded, out of no clear-cut motive, to become a witness for a committee investigating police corruption. He lays down the condition that he will not inform on any of his own partners – a condition which leads to his covering up his and their own dubious methods while incriminating

others, and which rebounds on him when the investigation inevitably spirals out of his control and teams of variously zealous, ambitious and publicity-hungry lawyers begin to see him as a target as well as a witness.

Like much else in the film, the silence or confusion over why Danny "turns" is more apparent than real. Towards the end, one of the district attorneys who has been coaxing him through his espionage against his fellow officers testifies at a conclave of government attorneys who are debating whether or not to indict Danny. He supplies what could very well have been the film's key – Danny, he believes, was trying to make up for the thousand daily corruptions of his work in one grand act of explanation – except that the film is not constructed as a puzzle in need of a solution. Its multitude of scenes and its proliferation of characters (proliferating both as the investigation widens and as the moral implications of Danny's turning against his own kind increase) comment on and qualify each other but don't build dramatically in the usual way to satisfying explanations.

The characters are enacted quite forcefully, even theatrically (the director Sidney Lumet has a knack for high-octane performances not usually so well contained as here). But their psychology is mainly a matter of flat statements, like the lawyer's comment on Danny's religious sense of guilt. Equally, the

film's ambiguity is not a measure of its evasiveness or hypocrisy, but of its inclusiveness, its sharpness about the moral aspects of the situation. Among its sidelights is the suggestion that the lawyers who originally took Danny's testimony were aware that he was not telling the truth about himself, but suppressed the knowledge (while warning him against perjuring himself on the stand) in their eagerness to press their case.

Out of this multi-faceted view of character and circumstances the film draws its complex study of the policeman's problematic lot. The problem for Danny begins as one of loyalty, whether it is something he owes primarily to his partners and the people with whom he deals (in every sense) in the course of his work, or to a system which first offers him a chance to clear his conscience and then turns against him when explanation leads to self-incrimination. Danny angrily expounds his dilemma near the beginning when he rounds on the two attorneys who have approached him to turn informer. That the film does not become an apology for a kind of rough justice, meted out by the cop who takes from one junkie in order to give to another, is also a tribute to its critical intelligence. What emerges more is a quizzing of the system by which drugs become a law-enforcement problem, which then becomes a different kind of problem. The film's single flaw, in the end, is that it seems too short.

Christ unheard

By Harold Hobson

Star Over Bethlehem
BBC Television

Star Over Bethlehem, in which the BBC showed us Christmas celebrations from seven countries, might easily have been just a routine piece of ephemeral entertainment. But in actual fact it indirectly raised two questions which historians of theatre have hitherto avoided facing, but which they cannot very much longer ignore. For the narrative was written by Christopher Fry – whose last London play was produced no less than twenty years ago, while the last of the pieces that made him famous, *The Dark is Light Enough*, dates from as long since as 1954. To vast numbers of viewers his name must have been that of a stranger; to others it was the return of a treasure wilfully abandoned a quarter of a century ago. How can we assess the reputation of a man who, with Rattigan, we cruelly abandoned to the

merciless attack of the English Stage Company, supported, as it was, by the voices of many critics (among which mine was one of the most vociferous)?

Fry conceived that the tidings of great joy had been brought to a world that no longer listened. He presents to us a Christ isolated. Two men in national costume played zithers in front of a coldly floodlit Geneva church; but there was no audience. A group of blacks sang in the hall of an American university; but the hall was empty. With a furrowed brow, and eyes searching vainly upwards, an Arab in Jerusalem sang "The First Nowell" both in Arabic and in English. This was the loveliest thing in the programme, but again the would-be joyous words fell on no ears but those of the singer's small family. For the carol in St Martin-in-the-Fields the church was without a congregation. The great doors were wide open, and as the music flowed out one could see the unheeding motor cars flashing past, the story of Christ unheard, and Christ Himself forgotten. Fry's Christ is not even reviled and rejected; he is just ignored.

Fry and his generation were swept away by the creative and vituperative powers of the English Stage Company. Has what this company swept away been adequately compensated for by what it has created in its place? At present there is no doubt that the answer would be yes. But perhaps further investigation is called for. I have lately been required to read much of the drama of the 1930s, 1940s, and early 1950s: the English Stage Company, in its great days, always maintained that the theatre it repudiated and mere amusement. On this belief it greatly prospered. But this belief is a myth. The theatre of *The Lady's Not for Burning*, *Veritas Observed*, and *The Dark is Light Enough* was the theatre of *The Browning Version*, *Marching Song*, *Home Is Tomorrow*, *The Cocktail Party*, *The Confidential Clerk*, *Alexander the Great*, and *Saints' Day*. There is not much of French windows and "Who's for the night?" here. The great questions have not yet been completely settled.

The analytical line

By Richard Calvocoressi

Käthe Kollwitz 1867-1945:
The Graphic Works

Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art

The work of Käthe Kollwitz, one of this century's stronger graphic artists, is virtually unknown in Britain; there cannot be many more than a dozen of her prints in public collections. And yet at an exhibition of modern German art held in London in 1938 she was described in the accompanying leaflet as "the greatest woman artist in Germany". Her work has affinities with that of the sculptor Ernst Barlach, three years her junior, and also with the allegorical imagery of Lovis Corinth, her senior by nine years. Looking at her prints one is often reminded too of Munch, of his flowing line and habit of portraying a pair or a group of figures as a single, living organism.

All these artists were greatly indebted to nineteenth-century German Symbolism and were of a slightly older generation than the Expressionists. But in Kollwitz's art the symbolist emphasis on the archetypal and anonymous, as opposed to the individual and local, is tempered by a passionate interest in the world around her. That world was not a pleasant or happy one. At the time of the London exhibition in 1938 her work was proscribed by the Nazis although she was still living in Berlin where her husband, Karl Kollwitz, had been a doctor since their marriage in 1891. Her second son Peter had been killed in action at the beginning of the First World War. Both her husband and grandson were to die during the Second World War; the latter also in action. Kollwitz herself survived until a few days before Germany's collapse in the spring of 1945; she was seventy-seven when she died.

Much of her subject matter is based directly on observation and experience: sick children and women – the latter shown emaciated and vulnerable – who wait for their husbands to return. The image of the mother, sitting, her dead child on her lap, is repeated in her work and in certain works seems to have

almost mystical import. Very occasionally this tips over into melodrama, as in the lithographic suite *Tod* of 1933, where the heavy dark outlining of form and extremely vivid personification of death are better suited to the emotive language of posters. The series of seven woodcuts called *Krieg*, begun in 1922, contains some of Kollwitz's most anguished and violent imagery and, like Barlach's woodcuts which so impressed her, has a religious intensity of feeling which relates it to German medieval art. But *Tod* and *Krieg* are essentially public statements. From time to time Kollwitz did make jaded images of this kind, usually for propaganda reasons, and some of them have been criticized for their excessive sentimentality. But the majority of her works, and in particular the less formal private drawings, deal with misery and pain in a convincing manner, at once touching and detached. Her searching analytical line spares no one, and nothing – least of all herself, as can be seen in her remarkably honest self-portraits.

Kettle's Yard, Cambridge, where the exhibition was first shown, is to be congratulated for having assembled this exhibition of over a hundred drawings, lithographs, etchings, woodcuts and posters, and for having commissioned an excellent essay in the catalogue from Keith Hartley, who discusses the two main strands in Kollwitz's art: its naturalism and its symbolical or quasi-religious content. For the iconography of her two early series of prints, *A Weavers' Uprising* (based on Hauptmann's play *The Weavers*) and *Peasants' War*, Kollwitz turned to the great nineteenth-century French tradition of Realism and especially to the scenes of rural labour given grandeur and monumentality by Millet. Her identification with the struggles of an oppressed proletariat and with the tragic fate of women have encouraged Communist and feminist alike to claim. Käthe Kollwitz, as their own, but at its best her art refuses to do anything so limiting as to serve a cause. The exhibition is in Edinburgh until January 20. It will be at the ICA Gallery, London, from February 13 until March 14. The catalogue (88pp, with 80 black and white illustrations, £2.95, 0-907074-11-1) is available from Kettle's Yard, Northampton Street, Cambridge CB3 0AQ.

New Oxford Books:
Philosophy
and Politics

Moral Thinking

Its Levels, Method,
and Point
R.M. Hare

This book is a continuation of the enterprise which the author began with *The Language of Morals* (1952) and *Freedom and Reason* (1963). In the present work, the author has fashioned, out of the logical and linguistic theories of his earlier books, a full-scale but readily intelligible account of moral argument. £11 paper covers £3.95.

Paul of Venice

Logica Magna: Part I,
Fascicule VII
Edited by Patricia Clarke

In Part I, Fascicule VII of his *Logica Magna* the late medieval logician Paul of Venice considers the question whether something known by someone can be uncertain to him or not known to him. In her introduction and notes the editor aims to provide enough information and explanation to enable a reader to become acquainted with this part of Paul's work without having to consult other sources and books of reference. £40 British Academy.

Kant's
Theory of MindAn Analysis of the
Paralogisms of Pure
Reason
Karl Ameriks

This book presents a discussion of each of the several topics arising in the chapter on the Paralogisms in Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*: the mind's immateriality, simplicity, substantiality, relation to embodiment and the external world, identity, immortality, freedom, and ideality. The author argues that the Paralogisms are much more indebted to Rationalism than most readers have realized, and that it is more defensible than most prominent interpreters have allowed. £15.

Hamann on
Language
and Religion

Terence J. Gorman S. J.

This work presents Johann Georg Hamann's thoughts concerning language and religion. There has been a renaissance of interest in Hamann and his works in Germany since the 1960s, and he deserves to be more widely known. £12.50.

Gramsci's Political
ThoughtHegemony,
Consciousness, and the
Revolutionary Process
Joseph V. Ferlie

The unifying idea of Antonio Gramsci's famous *Prison Notebooks* is the concept of hegemony; in his study of these fragmentary writings, Dr Ferlie elucidates the precise character of this concept, explores its basic philosophical assumptions, and sets out its implications for Gramsci's explanation of social stability and his vision of the revolutionary process. £17.50.

Oxford
University Press

to the editor

'Auschwitz and the Allies'

Sir, - I was somewhat disturbed to read D. W. Thomas's assertion (Letters, December 18) that "Martin Gilbert... says that if the RAF were able to reach industrial complexes near Auschwitz, they could easily have destroyed the gas chambers and railway lines".

Nowhere in my book *Auschwitz and the Allies* do I say any such thing.

The industrial complexes in east upper Silesia, the region in which Auschwitz lay, were the target area of United States bombers, not of the RAF. The United States's bombing priority in the summer of 1944 was the German synthetic oil plants and oil-storage depots. The reason for this priority is fully explained in my book.

There is no evidence, nor do I write, that Allied bombing forces "could easily have destroyed", or could have destroyed at all, the four gas chambers at Auschwitz-Birkenau. Destroying railway lines was likewise difficult, although marshalling yards and junctions could be put out of operation, especially in the Hungarian-Slovak regions, for up to twenty-four hours, and sometimes longer.

During a six-week period beginning on May 15, 1944, each twenty-four-hour period saw as many as 12,000 Jews deported northwards to their deaths over these Hungarian-Slovak lines. Using this present-day knowledge, it has recently been argued that even a twenty-four-hour break might therefore have saved lives. But, as my book shows, the fact that these Hungarian deportations were taking place at all remained unknown in the west for their six most intensive weeks. Only when the fact of the deportations

became known at the beginning of July was the appeal made to bomb the camp and lines.

This appeal was first made in London on July 6, 1944, at Weizmann's interview with Eden (pp 267-70). Within forty-eight hours, however, and long before this first bombing appeal could be fully examined, the Hungarian deportations which had prompted it were brought to an abrupt end. This was mainly as a result of international, including Vatican, protests, which were made from the first moment that the news of the fate of the deportees became known.

From that moment, the Jewish Agency's priority switched from appeals to the Allies for bombing, to requests for emigration facilities. The emigration priority arose because of a Hungarian Government offer, then believed to be genuine, to allow tens of thousands of surviving Jews to leave (pp 286-90).

In the bombing section of my book I deal in detail with the reaction of all groups to the requests for bombing, from a leading Jewish figure in the United States who argued at the time - as your correspondent does now - that such a raid would kill the inmates and should therefore not be attempted (p 256), to Churchill who intimated: "Get anything out of the Air Force you can, and invoke me if necessary" (p 270).

Further requests for bombing did reach the Allies in the autumn of 1944, when other deportations were taking place, mostly from Poland. But these requests were not examined, following a Washington War Department instruction on the first request of all to "kill this" (p 248), and also because of reluctance in the London Foreign Office to press the Air Ministry to make sufficient enquiries to see whether any such bombing was feasible. It was this

reluctance which led one official to express his own sense of unease, and to say that his department was "technically guilty" (p 319) of not following up the request as they might have done.

This letter can, of course, only be a brief and incomplete summary of part of a complex story which I have tried to tell in considerable detail, in a book of 368 pages.

MARTIN GILBERT.
Merton College, Oxford.

Thomas Jefferson

Sir, - Anthony Quinton's review of Donald Hall's *The Oxford Book of American Literary Anecdotes* (December 4) expresses initial surprise that several pages of the volume are devoted to Thomas Jefferson, whose literary credentials are doubtful. Upon reflection, though, Quinton is satisfied, because "Hall excuses the presence of Jefferson by referring to him, quite correctly of course, as the author of the American Constitution". Apart from that he is not widely read.

"Quite correctly of course" has an authoritative ring, but Messrs Quinton and Hall are both ill informed. The Constitution of the United States was drafted at the Philadelphia Convention in the summer of 1787. Jefferson was not in attendance; he was thousands of miles away, serving as American Minister to France. The Constitution was not the work of a single author, but its principal formulator was Jefferson's close friend and successor as President, James Madison. Jefferson did indeed write something that was very "widely read": a document that was designed not to create a new frame of government but to justify a rebellion against a long-established one. It was the Declaration of Independence, unanimously approved by the thirteen colonies on July 4, 1776. Jefferson has been called the "father" of many things, including (improbably) several of the children of his slave, Sally Hemings. He was not in any sense the father of the Constitution, nor even a very ardent supporter of it during the ratification debates.

STEPHAN THERNSTROM.
Charles Warren Center for Studies in American History, Harvard University, Robinson Hall, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138.

Behaviourist Language

Sir, - Do not try to give Rosemary Dinneen red corundums; she will accept only rubies. To judge from her review of my *Notebooks* (December 4) she does not seem to know that every field of knowledge has two vocabularies: one everyday English and the other the technical terms of a scientific analysis. I should have supposed that Eddington had made that clear decades ago in speaking of his "two tables". I cannot decide whether Dinneen wants me to confine myself to technical terms or to apologize whenever I speak ordinary English. The fact is that, although a radical behaviourist, I feel (sic) quite free (sic) to talk about my ideas, wishes, and beliefs. Upon other occasions I talk about the same things in other ways which evidently seem as absurd to Dinneen as saying "red corundum" for "ruby". I am sure that literature is more effective when written in everyday English and cannot understand why Dinneen feels she must insist upon it. What fun she would have if she caught an astronomer in the act of telling his children that when the sun goes down (i) the stars will begin to come out (i).

B. F. SKINNER.
William James Hall, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138.

Thomas Jefferson

Sir, - Glad though I was to see in the TLS (Commentary, December 18) a full-length review given to the important exhibition "Famous Books in Science" in the British Library, my enthusiasm for the breadth of learning covered by your paper was tempered by the existence of a number of errors. I am afraid that the authority of the TLS may serve to perpetuate myths, acceptable a generation ago, but now exposed by professional historians of science.

I had thought that the story of Newton's formulation of the theory of universal gravitation, by about 1665, was now discredited. I did not know that Galileo was able to demonstrate stellar parallax and the Copernican death-bed scene is probably imaginary. Robert Boyle's ideas on chemical elements are misunderstood and misrepresented by your contributor. As for Joseph Priestley, far from "dismantling the phlogiston

theory" he rigorously defended it to his dying day. These are merely some of the errors which I noticed in a hurried reading.

Fortunately the article was largely a descriptive catalogue of the exhibition, listing titles of books and their contents. Heaven knows what mistakes might have been made in a more imaginative piece! I would not wish, however, to be totally negative in my criticisms, for there was obviously some valuable material in it which helped to put science in a chronological framework.

MAURICE CROSLAND.
Unit for the History, Philosophy and Social Relations of Science, The University, Canterbury, Kent.

'New Shell Guide'

Sir, - How reassuring to read, at the conclusion of Richard Cobb's fascinating preview of his *Rural Rides* (December 25), which are clearly going to be even more fun than Cobbett or Defoe, that, even though his heart sinks slowly in his breast, the most beautiful hill in his England is called Caer Caradoc.

There must be a moral there somewhere, as Gildas once remarked of Vortigern.

GWYN A. WILLIAMS.
66 De Burgh Street, Riverside, Cardiff.

Sir, - Richard Cobb (December 25) takes the *New Shell Guide to England* to task for failing to mention that Louis Philippe died at Eastbourne, "very suitably for *le Roi Bourgeois*".

Since Eastbourne was soon to become the favourite resort of Marx and Engels, its suitability for Professor Cobb's purpose is a matter for debate; but other authorities, from the *Penguin Guide to Surrey to Le Nouveau Petit Larousse*, all kill off Louis Philippe in the undoubtedly regal setting of Claremont.

PHILIP JONES.
109 Maycross Avenue, Morden, Surrey SM4 4DF.

Emerging Early

Sir, - My first volume of poems was *The London Zoo*, published in 1961, when I was forty-seven. Does this count as "emerging early" (Anthony Thwaite, January 1)?

C. H. SISSON.
Moordfield Cottage, The Hill, Langport, Somerset TA10 9PU.

Among this week's contributors

ROBERT BROWN is a Professorial Fellow in the History of Ideas at the Australian National University, Canberra.

ALAN BROWNHOOD's most recent collection of poems *A Night in the Gazebo*, was published in 1981.

ANTHONY BURGESS's most recent novel is *Earthly Powers*, 1981. His opera *The Blooms of Dublin* is to be broadcast this year.

RICHARD CALVOCCORRESE is research assistant at the Tate Gallery.

C. H. DODD is Professor of Political Studies at the University of Hull.

DOUGLAS DUNN's most recent book of poems, *Six Kildas: Parliament*, was published in 1981.

KRISTIAN ELAM is the author of *The Semiotics of Theatre and Drama*, 1980.

APRIL FITZLYON's biography of Pauline Viardot, *The Prince of Genoa*, was published in 1964. She is now working on a biography of the singer Maria Malibran.

HENRY GIFFORD's *Pasternak: a Critical Study*, 1977, has recently been reissued as a paperback.

JULIE HANKEY's theatre-historical edition of *Richard III* was published last year.

JAMES HUNTER is the author of *The Making of the Crofting Community*, 1976.

PETER KEATING is the author of *The Working Classes in Victorian Fiction*, 1971.

STEPHAN KÖRNER is Professor of Philosophy at Yale University.

SCOTT LEATHART is editor of the *Quarterly Journal of Forestry* and former Secretary of the Royal Forestry Society.

KATHLEEN LENNON is a lecturer in Philosophy at the University of Hull.

HUGH LLOYD-JONES is Regius Professor of Greek at the University of Oxford. His most recent book is *Myths of the Zodiac*, 1978.

R. A. MARRAS is Professor of Medieval History at the University of Nottingham. He is the author of *Christianity in the Roman World*, 1974.

ADAM MARR-JONES's book of stories, *Lantern Lecture*, was published in 1981.

ANDREW MOTTON's long poem, *Independence*, was published in December.

JOHN NAUGHTON is the television critic of *The Listener*.

PETER SEDGWICK is a lecturer in Politics at the University of Leeds. His book *Psycho-Politics* will be published in February.

MATT SIMPSON's new collection of poems *Making Arrangements* will be published by Bloodaxe Books later this year.

ANNE STEVENSON is Northern Arts Fellow in Writing at the Universities of Newcastle and Durham. Her new collection of poems *Minute by Glass* will be published in 1982.

GEOFFREY STRICKLAND's book *Structuralism or Criticism* was published in 1981.

BARRY STROUD is Professor of Philosophy at the University of California, Berkeley and the author of *Hume*, 1977.

DAVID SWEETMAN's collection of poems *Looking into the Deep End* was published last year.

GEORGE SZIRTES's collection, of poems *November and May* will be reviewed in the TLS soon.

MICHAEL TANNER is a lecturer in Philosophy at the University of Cambridge.

JENNIFER UGLOW is the editor of *Essays on Literature and Art by Walter Pater*, 1975.

CHRIS WALLACE-CRABBE's most recent book of poems is *Splinters*, 1981.

STANLEY WELLS is the compiler of *Nineteenth-Century Shakespeare: Burleagues*, 1977.

M. E. YARR's most recent book is *Strategies of British India: Iron and Afghanistan, 1798-1850*, 1980.

Line by mighty line

By Stanley Wells

J. S. CUNNINGHAM (Editor):
Tamburlaine the Great
338pp. Manchester University Press.
£21.50.
0 8018 2669 1

No English dramatist, surely, has ever made a more astounding debut in the professional theatre than Christopher Marlowe with *Tamburlaine*. In his finest moments the hero still leaps from the page like a figure out of Michelangelo or Blake, speaking the verse of a poet who has newly discovered that he could fill a theatre with sounds as impressive as those with which Tallis or Gibbons could fill a cathedral. No wonder a sequel was called for, and rapidly appeared. It is even harder to dissociate Marlowe from *Tamburlaine* than Shakespeare from *Prospero*, although - as the editor of this new Revels edition shows - we must make the effort to do so if we are to appreciate Marlowe's artistry as a dramatist, not simply as master of the mighty line. We have only to read J. S. Cunningham's admirable discussion of the varied reading that lies behind the play to realize that the young man who wrote it was not just an inspired improviser.

As often happens with Elizabethan plays, critical issues are complicated by textual problems. The two-part play first appeared in print in 1590. The first printed allusion to it comes in the Epistle to Robert Greene's *Perimedes the Blacksmith*, a pamphlet which was

published on March 29, 1588, but was entered on the Stationers' Register on that date and appeared some time later in the same year; the Epistle could conceivably have been written after the entry. There is a possible reference to *Tamburlaine* in a letter of November 1587, but we cannot be certain when either of the two parts was composed, or whether the work was conceived as a unity. According to the Prologue to Part Two, Marlowe was impelled to "pen his second part" as a result of "The general welcomes *Tamburlaine* received / When he arrived last upon our stage". This may well be so, in which case the direction at the end of Part One, "*Fins Actus quinti & ultimi huius primae partis*", which shows that whoever wrote it knew that a second part would follow, seems to suggest that the printer's copy was not, as Cunningham thinks possible, "Marlowe's original manuscript", but either a transcript (possibly authored or, at least, an edited version of Marlowe's papers).

Particularly tantalizing is the 1590 printer's statement, in a prefatory letter, that he has "purposely omitted and left out some fond and frivolous jestures, digressing and, in my poor opinion, far unmeet for the matter". It would be extraordinary for an Elizabethan printer to be so high-minded as to omit deliberately passages that had helped to give the work its undoubted theatrical popularity, and Fredson Bowers has suggested the truth may be that they were absent from the printer's manuscript: "hence his virtuous defence of the omission of unsuitable scenes may very possibly be an attempt to anticipate criticism that

they were not present, though acted". This speculation opens the door to the possibility that the printed text represents the authentic one, and that it was corrupted in performance. No certainty is possible, and no amount of conjecture will restore the lost fondness and frivolity. But it is interesting that modern criticism sees the surviving text as one that demands, and deserves, a response both far more complex and more inclusive of laughter than was apparent half a century ago. Professor Cunningham's valuable analysis of developing critical attitudes encouragingly demonstrates the extent to which patient academic study can further understanding.

This is not to claim that any unassailable consensus has been arrived at; but the text has been explored in relation to its scholarly and theatrical background in ways that help to explain features previously found puzzling, and to justify what had seemed faults to critics who insisted on Marlowe's "uncritical partisanship with his aspiring hero-figures". The editor's own subtle and detailed reading happily leads up to a description of Peter Hall's production at the National Theatre in 1976 which, he feels, "convincingly established the integrity of the play", confirming "how continually... the grotesque impinges on the beautiful,

describes at greater length in the later book: walking the characters through the plays with chessmen on boards; casting them from photographs of well-known actors; saying a speech aloud with variations of pitch, volume, accent and speed, and so on.

In the new book the reader's mind is as important as Shakespeare's text; ideally, it seems, they are indivisible. Shakespeare's plays, according to Brown, "thrive in the level of our dreams and with the immediacy of our personal and exact experience". In turn, the reader who becomes truly involved is granted "the very sound, the unique touch, of Shakespeare's own voice". As a result, the book makes a convincing appeal to the reader to respond with "alacrity of mind, freedom of the imagination or fantasy", "to seek out and represent the thought-processes, feelings and personal life" in the lives of the characters, and warns against "settling" Shakespeare into "names and definitions". And lastly, in both books he makes the connection between his approach and the working conditions of the undirected, scantily rehearsed Elizabethan stage. There, "free" from the director's premeditated underlinings, he believes the actors to have been in immediate, vitalizing and risky contact with Shakespeare's people.

But in *Free Shakespeare* Brown wrote with the forward thrust of a polemicist; he was driven by an impatience (however judiciously expressed) with the limitations and pretensions of directors and scholars, to postulate an alternative actors' theatre, a sort of latter day Chamberlain's Men. His view of Shakespeare drew its force partly from the way he illustrated it, but greatly from his demonstrations (fair or unfair) of poverty at particular moments in the productions of the late 1960s and early 70s. The new book forgoes polemic, no longer seeking to demolish an opposition and suggest an alternative. What is left is the core of the earlier book, Shakespeare's unplanable imagination, recommended in greater and more elaborate detail, but this time to the ideal theatre of the reader's mind.

This internal theatre is, ostensibly, John Russell Brown's new concern. But even here he has anticipated himself. In the penultimate chapter of the earlier book he imagined a new kind of reader who could "see, hear and feel a play... and entertain its many possibilities in terms of a living and ever-changing image of life". He felt then, as now, that a sensual and emotional response to the words, helped of course by playgoing, would put the reader at an advantage over the playgoer, who would merely be witnessing one director's "packaged" point of view at a time. In that chapter he even suggested some of the same exercises for the theatrical imagination which he

observed remains a simple piety and is followed neither by such an analysis nor by any indication of what such an analysis might have to offer. Instead it introduces a lengthy plot summary, and indeed summary rather than analysis constitutes the bulk of this study. But, then, references to *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* as "the flipside of *Hamlet*", to the "thought content" of *Jumpers* and *Travellers*, and to directors who have "zeroed in on the existentialist philosophical context" suggest that the perceived market for this book is perhaps not one likely to respond to sophisticated analysis. Certainly it advances no thesis. Its value lies instead in the information it contains about Stoppard's early life and career, and in the extensive summaries it offers for those approaching his work for the first time. Londré also has an eye for apt quotation and a clear sympathy for a writer whose complex plots and subtle thought she faithfully renders.

By contrast, the title of Joan Fitzpatrick Dean's study does imply a thesis, but it is not one which is pressed over-hard. Thus there is in fact no effort to examine the nature of comedy or of the relationship to ethics; no effort to establish the relationship of Stoppard's work to the comedy of manners, to farce or, for the most part, to absurdist irony beyond a somewhat schematic attempt to distance him from Ionesco and Beckett. Similarly, while commenting on Stoppard's "virtual obsession with the question of perspective" she offers only the most perfunctory analysis of the use which he makes of it, failing to pursue the question with the rigour of individual texts. For it is indeed in such analyses that her strength lies and those seeking a sensitive introduction to Stoppard's work could with profit turn to this book, which offers a subtle and perceptive account of his work and the development of a moral sensibility. But I doubt the value of Dean's concluding remarks, which insist that he is "reactionary" and that his plays "tend toward the right", terms which shed no light on a writer wrestling not merely with a reductive political or theory but with a language whose own operations must be turned into exemplary freedoms, with fictional which must be made to serve as moral absolutes.

Felicia Londré's account unsurprisingly and rightly makes claims for the centrality of performance. Thus she observes of *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* that "it is a performance that [it] may be most fully and favourably judged" since "the flaws that have been perceived in it when it is evaluated by conventional literary criticism proved elusive when a given production is analyzed". But for the most part this

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the true heroic coarsens into ranting automatism, and which is chastened by our being brought to acknowledge the dark side of the joke".

Recognition of the play's theatrical complexity, and of aspects of it that the script leaves open to interpretation, is apparent too in the editor's treatment of details in the text. His excellent commentary includes imaginative discussion of staging problems, and he thoughtfully adds directions for action not supplied by earlier editors. He might have added even more: for example, he refers in his introduction to *Tamburlaine*'s "symbolic change of costume" but does not direct him to change at the appropriate point (Part One, 1.2.41), though a reader might not discern from the lines alone that he should do so.

The play's language is examined with exemplary thoroughness, and many notes supplement and correct information given in the *OED*. Just occasionally I was left seeking further enlightenment: about, for example, the usage in "thousands ever-shining lamps" and "hundred thousands subjects", not found elsewhere in Marlowe; and about why, at Part Two, 1.1.89, "substance" takes a plural agreement (is it a misreading, or variant, of the rare "substant", recorded as a noun only in 1595?).

The decision to modernize spelling properly implies a commitment to meaning rather than to such signals of pronunciation as may be gleaned, however ambiguously and imperfectly, from old forms. So I see no point in the spellings "Fesse" for modern "Faz", "Bagdeth" for "Baghdad", or "Cairon" for "Cairo" (especially as the latter form also exists in the text). As usual, though so far as I can see, modernization is not complete. Thus, though "murther" becomes "murder", "burthen" becomes "burden", and "Souldan" is changed to "Soldan" and glossed simply "Sultan", implying that there is no significance in the half-modernized spelling, in which case, since one possible pointer to pronunciation has been dropped, one wonders what objection there is to adopting the modern form. Ironically "brent" regularized in the 1597 edition, as the collations tell us, to "burnt", is here retained and glossed "burned"; consistently "clifts" is retained, with the gloss "cliffs", and, in defiance of sense, Boreas "rents a thousand swelling clouds".

But these are small points. In all important respects this is a first-class addition to an excellent series.

Mobilizing the words

By Julie Hankey

JOHN RUSSELL BROWN:
Discovering Shakespeare
A New Guide to the Plays
165pp. Macmillan. £12 (paperback, £3.50).
0 333 31633 9

Readers of John Russell Brown's *Free Shakespeare* (1974) will recognize the ideas in his new book, *Discovering Shakespeare: a New Guide to the Plays*. In both he explores the unfixed Shakespearean moment, unfolding some (sometimes the same one) so as to reveal their performable alternatives. In both he sees a just appreciation of the plays as flowing only from a "personal engagement" in the lives of the characters, and warns against "settling" Shakespeare into "names and definitions". And lastly, in both books he makes the connection between his approach and the working conditions of the undirected, scantily rehearsed Elizabethan stage. There, "free" from the director's premeditated underlinings, he believes the actors to have been in immediate, vitalizing and risky contact with Shakespeare's people.

But in *Free Shakespeare* Brown wrote with the forward thrust of a polemicist; he was driven by an impatience (however judiciously expressed) with the limitations and pretensions of directors and scholars, to postulate an alternative actors' theatre, a sort of latter day Chamberlain's Men. His view of Shakespeare drew its force partly from the way he illustrated it, but greatly from his demonstrations (fair or unfair) of poverty at particular moments in the productions of the late 1960s and early 70s. The new book forgoes polemic, no longer seeking to demolish an opposition and suggest an alternative. What is left is the core of the earlier book, Shakespeare's unplanable imagination, recommended in greater and more elaborate detail, but this time to the ideal theatre of the reader's mind.

This internal theatre is, ostensibly, John Russell Brown's new concern. But even here he has anticipated himself. In the penultimate chapter of the earlier book he imagined a new kind of reader who could "see, hear and feel a play... and entertain its many possibilities in terms of a living and ever-changing image of life". He felt then, as now, that a sensual and emotional response to the words, helped of course by playgoing, would put the reader at an advantage over the playgoer, who would merely be witnessing one director's "packaged" point of view at a time. In that chapter he even suggested some of the same exercises for the theatrical imagination which he

observed remains a simple piety and is followed neither by such an analysis nor by any indication of what such an analysis might have to offer. Instead it introduces a lengthy plot summary, and indeed summary rather than analysis constitutes the bulk of this study. But, then, references to *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* as "the flipside of *Hamlet*", to the "thought content" of *Jumpers* and *Travellers*, and to directors who have "zeroed in on the existentialist philosophical context" suggest that the perceived market for this book is perhaps not one likely to respond to sophisticated analysis. Certainly it advances no thesis. Its value lies instead in the information it contains about Stoppard's early life and career, and in the extensive summaries it offers for those approaching his work for the first time. Londré also has an eye for apt quotation and a clear sympathy for a writer whose complex plots and subtle thought she faithfully renders.

By contrast, the title of Joan Fitzpatrick Dean's study does imply a thesis, but it is not one which is pressed over-hard. Thus there is in fact no effort to examine the nature of comedy or of the relationship to ethics; no effort to establish the relationship of Stoppard's work to the comedy of manners, to farce or, for the most part, to absurdist irony beyond a somewhat schematic attempt to distance him from Ionesco and Beckett. Similarly, while commenting on Stoppard's "virtual obsession with the question of perspective" she offers only the most perfunctory analysis of the use which he makes of it, failing to pursue the question with the rigour of individual texts. For it is indeed in such analyses that her strength lies and those seeking a sensitive introduction to Stoppard's work could with profit turn to this book, which offers a subtle and perceptive account of his work and the development of a moral sensibility. But I doubt the value of Dean's concluding remarks, which insist that he is "reactionary" and that his plays "tend toward the right", terms which shed no light on a writer wrestling not merely with a reductive political or theory but with a language whose own operations must be turned into exemplary freedoms, with fictional which must be made to serve as moral absolutes.

Felicia Londré's account unsurprisingly and rightly makes claims for the centrality of performance. Thus she observes of *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* that "it is a performance that [it] may be most fully and favourably judged" since "the flaws that have been perceived in it when it is evaluated by conventional literary criticism proved elusive when a given production is analyzed". But for the most part this

observation remains a simple piety and is followed neither by such an analysis nor by any indication of what such an analysis might have to offer. Instead it introduces a lengthy plot summary, and indeed summary rather than analysis constitutes the bulk of this study. But, then, references to *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* as "the flipside of *Hamlet*", to the "thought content" of *Jumpers* and *Travellers*, and to directors who have "zeroed in on the existentialist philosophical context" suggest that the perceived market for this book is perhaps not one likely to respond to sophisticated analysis. Certainly it advances no thesis. Its value lies instead in the information it contains about Stoppard's early life and career, and in the extensive summaries it offers for those approaching his work for the first time. Londré also has an eye for apt quotation and a

Testing the rules

By Geoffrey Strickland

GRAHAM DUNSTAN MARTIN:
The Architecture of Experience:
A Discussion of the Role of Language
and Literature in the Construction
of the World.
201pp. Edinburgh University Press.
£12.
0 85224 409 6

It is good that a book like this can still appear in Britain, published by a reputable university press. It draws on and offers its own contribution to specialist studies in the field of linguistic philosophy, the psychology of perception and memory and the sociology of knowledge. Yet it has no pretensions to specialist expertise. Its virtues are intellectual rather than academic and it resembles in this respect the work of French rather than Anglo-Saxon thinkers; that of Merleau-Ponty, for example, of whose viewpoint and approach one is sometimes reminded, even if he is nowhere mentioned. Graham D. Martin lectures on French literature and his book is partly a defence of the classics of literature written from what, in terms of contemporary literary theory, is clearly a "humanist" point of view. (E.M. Forster is a novelist he quotes several times.) Whether one is convinced by the arguments or not, his book can be read as the personal testimony of a

cultured and public-spirited man. It is also a reasoned apology for individual and (though he doesn't use the word) "elitist" values, against the assaults of fashionable academic philistinism.

"What is consciousness?" Martin begins by asking and he defends from the outset the notion of the primacy and irreducibility of individual perception. In sociology, for example, "there is no model save consciousness's paintings of other consciousnesses". Yet social science "is not competent to discuss the individual". (The sociologist who exhibits such expertise presumably forfeits his credentials.) This is the great advantage of literature which, concerned as it is with individual awareness, has a pre-eminent ethical authority: for "the mere fact of individual consciousness... is sufficient to question law and morality, the realm of the 'abstract' which Martin, who finds truth and meaning only in the possibility of reference back from abstraction to individual experience, likens to the fixed habits of the senses which impede awareness and are self-perpetuating. The fixed categories of worldly knowledge and ethics are, no doubt, indispensable thought but they need constantly to be questioned and constructed anew; and one of the justifications of literature is precisely its subversive function.

Yet literature promotes awareness

also by drawing on and recasting, in what are sometimes unaccountably powerful and revealing associations, the latent images and feelings from the immeasurable store in the brain. Mnemosyne, we are reminded, was the mother of the Muses. Developing an argument from his earlier *Language, Truth and Poetry* and drawing on specialized experimental work, Martin speculates that all our past experiences are arguably, even if not demonstrably, available to memory and that total recall is a real possibility. Total recall itself (like that of Alexander Luria's unfortunate patient, afflicted with any verbal association without losing himself in a forest of minute particulars), would be incompatible with the understanding of poetry. It is our own and the poet's ability to select and generalize from particular detailed memories that makes a new combination of associations possible and thereby communication between those whose memories have, inevitably, common features while remaining distinct and unique. The book ends with a defence of the ways in which individuals collaborate in creating meaning and value and with an attack on the kind of moral relativism which, by denying itself the right to judge alien values, makes all values seem equally illusory. This assumption, Martin argues, underlies the egalitarianism of sociologists, educationalists and critics like Michael Young, Brian Jackson and Terry Hawkes.

The main disadvantage of Martin's admirably bold approach to what he sees as matters of the utmost human concern is that he sometimes allows his case to rest on one-sided arguments in what remain matters of genuine debate. His attitude to the question, for example, appears to be that of a kind of nominalist, but the objections to nominalism are disregarded. He makes some telling points about the more naïve kind of moral relativism. Must we refuse to condemn, he asks, the continued widespread practice of clitoridectomy throughout the Third World? To include D.Z. Phillips and Peter Winch among the naïve relativists is, however, to ignore the genuine problems which trans-cultural judgments of value entail. There is an objection too which, at least needs to be answered to the idea that fiction provides "a testing-ground for the applicability of moral law." Not only can

novelists cheat. How can they avoid doing so when they fake all the evidence and deal only in hypothetical cases? Some of Martin's illustrations might be taken, unfortunately, as justifying this objection. He praises Huck Finn, for example, for preferring damnation to the betrayal of nigger Jim and for having the courage to choose love and what is humanly real rather than an impersonal moral code. Yet one of the reasons for which this episode can seem poignant and heroic and not merely an illustration of Martin's somewhat obvious general point (as a contribution to Twain's anti-Christian polemic) is that to save Jim, Huck has to betray other friends, as well as what he believes to be the Christian law. The moral law with which he wrestles is in fact highly personalized. Some of the nicest people in the novel own slaves.

Asking the unaskable

By Lachlan Mackinnon

BARBARA JOHNSON:
The Critical Difference
146pp. Johns Hopkins University Press. £7.25.
0 8018 2458 3

Troubled by the problem of syntax and what can be said of this "necessary but insufficient condition for saying anything at all" Barbara Johnson says that she "did what any modern student of poetics would do: I went to see what Mallarmé said about it". She has already offered a reading of Mallarmé's "Le Némphar blanc" as pointing to its own indeterminately allegorical status as its true subject, and of Baudelaire's two "Invitations au voyage" (poem and prose-poem) as each "the pre-text of the other", an asymmetric pair which question each other's exclusiveness by being ambiguously distinct: writing about writing about writing, and stylishly done. Unsurprisingly, she finds Mallarmé helpfully ambivalent about syntax, granting it a power which he systematically subverts into incompatible alternatives. "Mallarmé is to Chomsky as Copernicus is to Ptolemy as Freud is to Descartes, in that the former in each case works out a strategically rigorous decentering of the structure described by the latter, not by multiplying that structure but by multiplying the forces at work in the field of which that structure is a part." Poetry, she decides, shows us that "knowledge is an effect of syntax", that the way we

expounded, not at all tediously, by Jacques Leenhardt.

The essay which most successfully comes to terms with lectorial processes - by concentrating on given readings rather than surveyed or hypothesized readers - is Jonathan Culler's set of "prologomena" to a theory of reading. Culler, in contrast to a number of critical interpretations of Blake's "London", demonstrates convincingly that even where their conclusions are opposed, the interpretive moves involved obey common principles or conventions. In less able hands, such meta-meta-parasitic reportage of the "critical survey" kind, and it is hard to see how such an enterprise might come to constitute, as Culler would wish, an autonomous alternative to the hermeneutic criticism on which it necessarily feeds. Nevertheless, Culler's programme for an explicit and rigorous poetics of literary competence represents the one coherent proposal here for a critical encounter with extra-textual readers or readings of texts.

of course, than Wayne Booth's investigation into implied authors which dominated narrative criticism in the 1960s, and here it produces some very lively specific readings, notably Christine Brooke-Rose's entertaining Barthesian reconstruction of the encoded reader in "Rip Van Winkle". But the notion of a closed-circuit self-reading by the narrative is somewhat at odds with what might be termed the *careful lector* principle, sustained by the majority of the volume's contributors, namely that "actual" readers are themselves responsible for the semantic or hermeneutic goods they take from the text: in Robert Crossman's slogan, "readers make meanings". How the poor empirical reader, and not his intratextual counterpart, goes about making his meanings is a matter considered by very few of the commentators here, although the "uncertain" introspective approach ("in funny things happened to me on my way through the narrative") is all too confidently illustrated by Norman Holland, while the "tedious" sociological survey method ("We and Peace: good, bad or indifferent?") is

Brown's Nautical Almanac, 1934

In this determiner of stars and tides, ascensions, declinations, azimuths, of navigable distances, beacons, buoyancy, I see my father holding course for the New World of his marriage, myself two years away from sliding down the slipway, dragging chains.

Here are his totipolished brass clinometers, liquid compass binnacle, course correctors, sounding gear. Here is easterly lore; ephemeral for tracking over sea and sky by star-conjunction, numbered tides. By this his bearings can be true for civil days in port.

And here are hoisted storm cones he must have seen his rusty cut-wave by North West Light and Ball Boat Beacon thrusting in on Liverpool.

Matt Simpson

Small-town uncertainties

By Adam Mars-Jones

LOUIS D. RUBIN:
Surfaces of a Diamond
209pp. Louisiana State University Press. £7.75.
0 8071 0897 9

The text of *Surfaces of a Diamond*, a novel describing the summer of 1939 as experienced by a Jewish teenager in South Carolina, arrives with a number of barriers round it. The cover photograph, of an adolescent gazing across sun-splashed water, suggests the most sentimental of memoirs, and a blurb which argues that the book's hero is not "an alienated boy" but "an enthusiastic baseball player", who "enjoys a rapport with the world around him", does nothing to help. Clearly Louis D. Rubin's publishers wish to claim a genre on his behalf (the novel-of-adolescence) without losing readers who might be immune to it.

But title is the author's responsibility, and if *Surfaces of a Diamond* avoids actual cliché (by its refusal of the word *facets*), it is certainly vague and even misleading, since baseball (a sport in which *diamond* is a technical term) intermittently plays a large part in the novel.

Even after the title there is unhelpful material to come: three pages in italics follow, explaining that hindsight is the enemy of fictional authenticity, and that an adult must not overrule the priorities of the child he once was, when he comes to record those early days. These pages, and

the similar passages which begin each of the book's sections, belong in a working notebook, not to the novel itself.

Once the book has explicitly announced its intentions and thereby failed to embody them, it becomes hard to assess in any other terms; and even if the reader can forget its stated ambitions, its sheer tameness as compared with, say, *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* or *Catcher in the Rye* is damaging enough.

Any intensity in the child's experience has already been damped out; the measured tone has already reconciled and forgiven, and all the tension has drained from events. It doesn't matter that the narrator, Omar Kohn, is an ordinary boy, but he never even seems unique to himself (which is surely unusual). He is prematurely aged in his self-knowledge, and in the modesty of his expectations; no crises await him. Events build, just a little, and life becomes more complicated; but drama remains at a distance. Omar Kohn is unhealthily free of self-obsession, and his deviations from the norm seem hardly substantial, even in small-town America. He dislikes antisemitism, for instance, and the low-mindedness of his friends; but he feels no particular pressure to define himself either as a Jew or as a self being. He is still a virgin by book's end, and though a visit to relatives has acquainted him with different ways of being Jewish, he has yet to absorb the new knowledge. In one of the offending explanatory passages, twenty pages from the end of the book, the author writes (about "the protagonist of this story") that "I anticipate that one of

the things he is going to begin to understand is that back in Charleston when he was listening in the Sonata in A Major on his uncle's phonograph, he was also, without knowing it, hearing the *Kol Nidrei*", but this is not a convincing way of tying off a narrative thread. It continues to dangle.

Oblique without being subtle, Rubin's story gains nothing from being cast in the first person; Omar Kohn tells us almost nothing about himself. He describes his world, but his position in it is vague rather than problematic; he recounts conversations, but refrains from commenting on his own contributions. Given all this, understatement tends inexorably towards flatness.

A typical result is the sentence "The freighter was riding low in the water, probably laden with Chilean nitrate", in which the mixture of atmospheres and perverse detail creates uncertainty. Will a nitrate consortium enter the Neighborhood Baseball League, or will the freighter sail right out of the book? The latter, as it happens, but many other sentences send mixed signals.

The book as a whole amounts to a small-town Bildungsroman, with a stolid Stephen Dedalus at its centre; the profession of journalism, moreover, has superseded the destiny of the artist-priest. The book's virtues are too limited to make converts, since it refers to experience, instead of creating it. *Surfaces of a Diamond* is written by a heterosexual American-Jewish academic born in 1926; and the further the reader diverges from this pattern, the less pleasure he is likely to get from it.

The age of Aquarius

By Alan Brownjohn

RACHEL INGALLS:
Mrs Calliban
125pp. Faber. £5.50.
0 571 11826 7

One of the skilful features of Rachel Ingalls' new novel - her first book for seven years - is its capacity to keep the reader storing clues and hints in the memory in case they all have some relevance to a wider plan to be revealed in its final pages. In the event, most of them do not; and the proliferation of loose ends left untied means that one needs an ability to be charmed or intrigued by weird bits of detail which exist purely for their own sake in order to enjoy the novel. *Mrs Calliban* is certainly not the sort of allegory that appeals to those who want their fictions to work with the evidence and consistency of an intricate machine, in which everything relates to everything else.

Dorothy and Fred are fully aware that after the accidental death of their only child, and a subsequent miscarriage, their marriage is drifting through inanition towards a break-up. Fred routinely goes off to work, where Dorothy suspects he may be having an affair. Dorothy (sometimes "Dot") stays at home and begins to hear nasty, soothing voices speaking directly to her on her ancient radio as she does the dishes. We are in suburban America, and there is sudden and alarming media coverage of the escape of a sea-creature from an Institute of Oceanographic Research. This is "Aquarius the Monsterman", and all six foot seven of him, walking and talking and consuming the sticks of celery she offers; enters Dorothy's kitchen, transforming her life by becoming her house-guest (in the guest quarters the preoccupied Fred never visits) and her lover. The monster, who is soon familiarly known as Larry, is a lost and simple life-force restored to Dorothy, a creature of brutal innocence who gives her a sense of purpose and a new joy in eating.

Larry, unfortunately, ought to bring more symbolic weight and conviction than he does to the action that follows, where perfunctory discussions with Dorothy about nature and nurture, the strange habits of civilized beings, and

the purpose of living, fail to prove particularly trenchant or profound. Rachel Ingalls weaves her philosophical comments into a set of episodes involving Larry (he is heavily disguised so that people cannot see he is a huge green frog) and Dorothy in night-driving which take them to the sea, and to a mysterious garden of bamboo trees and elegant sofas. She has Dorothy's daytime activities - while Larry stays at home behind closed curtains, hidden from the police and the television crews - focus on a cool and slightly bitchy friendship with Estelle. Estelle is a decent enough parody of liberated American womanhood, who in turn lifts Dorothy out of her restricted home life with visits to "the studios", and uses her as a listening ear for her own troubles. There is a suggestion of gentle satire about their conversations concerning consumer goods, lovers and children, but it remains too elusive to catch. The narrative is altogether

rather vague and inconsequential (even dream-like stories can have more vigour); and is all the time leading to a dénouement in that same bamboo garden, and the revelation of the point which a watchful reader will have guessed for some time.

Several readily identifiable fables lie behind *Mrs Calliban*, supplying it with most of the little power and excitement it possesses as a shot at macabre moral fantasy. But merely blending the ingredients of the frog prince, the beauty and her beast, and Shakespeare's monster from the sea, and stirring them all into a modern setting rendered with scarcely any depth or thoroughness, does not seem enough. Miss Ingalls's prose shows some signs of delicacy and astute organization. Sadly, in this novel it wastes itself in the service of a tale which, long before a predictable conclusion, lapses into the purest banality.

Spirit and Act

or, The Last Metro

The play rips on, miraculous, gusts, bizarre while the whole earth is footlights but a weird message jumps the synapses from god-knows what cortical depths.

The song's name is death, actors drive home information from the left lobe or thesian bunker where the invisible decrees what kind of show goes on

and on and on. Respiring through fleshy gressapaint the actor is a standing cock or brassy barrel of jokes but the audience died long ago.

Deep in the earth the director, the Hebrew, ear to an airhole sweats and thinks while at ground level Catherine's long thigh is getting stroked.

Chris Wallace-Crabbe

Blundering in

By David Profumo

NICHOLAS BEST:
Where Were You at Waterloo?
174pp. Robert Hale. £6.95.
0 7091 9071 9

Rumoured to be under threat of attack by the neighbouring Santa Monica, the diminutive island of Casuarina in the Indian Ocean has been reinforced with a crack British regiment, the Gobiin Guards. Their rapid translation from the world of Trooping the Colour and Sandhurst snobbery to the perils of uncharted jungle is an unhappy one, attended by administrative inefficiency and ignorant leadership. Nicholas Best relates in excellent comic style the saga of their gradual acclimatization to the bizarre circumstances of colonial duty.

The officer commanding the detachment is a linguistic simpleton, Major the Earl of Malplaquet, who sees this assignment as a chance to secure a military reputation for himself. Carrying a lock of Wellington's hair, and flying his ancestral standard on a jeep, Malplaquet blunders his way into history at the expense of his wretched subordinates, especially the heroic Sebastian Clinch, the finely observed central figure of the book. It transpires that the Santa Monica threat is a myth, and that the real danger is represented by the Warlocks, a band of hairy native

brigands who are engaged in smuggling a massive quantity of the local drug, "gandia", out of the island. Masterminding this operation is Leon Sullivan, a fierce and materialistic Messiah who holds court in the jungle, equipped with a private refrigerator stocked with supplies of a superior whisky and the heads of his recent amatory conquests. In the campaign to outwit Sullivan (whose trademark is to leave denture-prints on the buttocks of his decapitated former paramours), Clinch is supported by a motley troupe: his batman is a skinhead named Partridge, the Intelligence Officer, Foxtro, has just failed his History A-level, and manoeuvres are dogged by a filmmaker named Bo Lindström - "He directed a series for the under-fives called *Peterkin Puppet*. 'I know it,' said Malplaquet."

As a satire on military bigotry and shambaling officialdom, *Where Were You at Waterloo?* is in places as sharp as Waugh, and sometimes better. Nicholas Best is seldom snide, and his neatly conceived plot often reveals judicious glints of severe reality underneath the satirical tissue. Apart from his skill as a story-teller, Best's main strength is that he clearly knows the material from which the narrative is cut; a former soldier himself, he is also personally familiar with the business of Europeans invading Africa. His earlier book *Happy Valley* was a fascinating account of the English presence in Kenya (where Best grew up) and this novel is as shapely and as witty, a work to be relished for its shrewdness and oblique humour.

School for spy-catchers

By T. J. Binyon

ANTHONY PRICE:
Soldier No More
277pp. Gollancz. £6.95.
0 575 03028 3

Anthony Price's first novel, *The Labyrinth Makers*, introduced the character who has since become his chief spy-catcher - Dr David Audley of British Intelligence. Later novels furthered Audley's career, brought in colleagues - Colonel Jack Butler, in particular - friends and enemies. More recently, however, Anthony Price has been chronologically backtracking to fill in some of the gaps in Audley's earlier life. In *The 44 Vintage* we had his introduction to intelligence work; *The Hour of the Donkey* (Price's last book) took us back to 1940 and Dunkirk; Audley's

father was killed, but his schoolmaster survived. A lucky stroke, indeed, for it enables the latter to turn up again in *Soldier No More* with details of his pupil's childhood and youth. We learn, too, more about Audley as Byzantine historian and get one or two major shocks on the way.

Characteristically Anthony Price reveals the information in very oblique fashion. It is 1957, Captain David Butler, covering his military intelligence in Paris, is called back to London and given a new assignment: to wrinkle Audley out of his holiday tower in the Dordogne and re-recruit him into the department. Echoes of Suez and Hungary reverberate through the novel; interest of one kind is added by three delightful young women, and of another by a hero of Verdun, once the finest trench-mortar man in the French army, who keeps a private arsenal in his stable. And, typically, the plot turns a few doleful somersaults before the final dénouement.

The author has given himself rather more space than usual, enabling detail to be cross-hatched to with a finer pen. But the ingenuity is as staggering, and the execution as impeccably neat as ever. Coarse readers, who want a larger dose of action in their rationing, will still think *The 44 Vintage* to be the best Price; more thoughtful ones will see that this is as good as anything he has done before.

In *Lord of the Ladies* (171pp, Robert Hale, £5.75 0 7091 9485 4), Joanna Dessau deals almost entirely in the love affairs of Lord Byron (whom the blurb describes as "crippled but charming and attractive") mentioning his poetry as little as possible. We are given a crisp rundown by Byron of his early life; Lady Caroline Lamb offers her account of the poet in under twenty pages. John Can. Hobhouse describes the wedding, and Annabella Milbanke the wedding night. Byron resumes the tale taking in the separation, Claire Clairmont and Teresa Culceth leaving, valet Fletcher to deal with Shelley's drowning and the final illness which he ascribes to doctors and excessive dieting ("starved himself he did, he was that feared of putting on weight"). The different narrative voices are barely differentiated and very little of Byron's style, let alone his genius, is conveyed.

Anti-social atmospheres

By John Naughton

BRUCE A. ACKERMAN and
WILLIAM T. HASSLER:
Clean Coal/Dirty Air
193pp. Yale University Press.
0 300 02628 5

It is a well-known characteristic of complex systems that action taken to remedy a specific local difficulty may eventually give rise to bigger difficulties elsewhere in the system. The logic of feedback and of interaction means that incremental policy-making is quite likely to produce what are sometimes called "counter-intuitive" effects, which may at first be unanticipated and at worst catastrophic.

There are few areas where this is more likely to happen than in legislative attempts to control or regulate environmental pollution. In part this stems from the complexity of natural systems, and from our current level of ignorance about their behaviour. But it also stems in part from the fact that legislative action in this area implies intervention at the intersection of several complex systems, which include not only the biosphere, but also political, administrative and economic systems.

Clean Coal/Dirty Air is a study of one attempt at legislative intervention in the realm of environmental pollution, namely the efforts made in the 1970s by the United States Congress to control sulphur emissions from coal-burning power plants. Bruce A. Ackerman and William T. Hassler trace the legislative and political background of this attempt, chronicle and analyse its failure, and point out what lessons can be learnt from the débâcle.

Currently, coal-burning plants generate almost fifty per cent of all the electric power produced in the United States, and the indications are that, in an oil-starved world, this percentage will grow over the next century. Since America has massive reserves of coal, this abundance must ease the periodic nightmares to which American energy planners are prone. Unfortunately, however, coal-burning plants are also the single most important source of the extremely unpleasant pollutants known as sulphur oxides.

Consequently, it was inevitable that the control of sulphur emissions by coal-fired plants would, sooner or later, find its way on to the American legislative agenda. This happened when Congress passed the Clean Air Amendments of 1970. Ackerman and Hassler focus on two aspects of this legislation which they regard as being, in retrospect, absolutely crucial. The first was that the Amendments contained legislation that made one person responsible for the attainment of their objectives — the Administrator of the (then) fledgling Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The second was that the new legislation not only required the Administrator to set quantitative clean air targets which would "protect the public health", but it also insisted that these targets should be reached by 1977 at the latest.

As coal always contains some sulphur (though the proportion varies greatly from one region to another), there are really only two ways of reducing sulphur emissions from coal-fired plants. The first is physical coal cleaning or "coal washing", which removes the sulphur before the coal is burned. In essence the process involves nothing more sophisticated than a wire screen and a water hose: freshly mined coal is crushed, passed through a screen and hoisted with high-pressure jets so that heavy sulphur-bearing fragments can settle out. This removes most of the sulphur-bearing particles, but cannot, of course, remove the sulphur which is chemically bonded to the coal. Nevertheless, it is possible to achieve considerable gains by adopting this primitive and reliable technology, which can amount to the removal of anything from twenty to forty per cent of the sulphur content of the fuel.

The other technology — which in 1970 was available only in embryonic form — is called "flue gas desulphurization" or, more commonly, "scrubbing". As exhaust gases flow up a power plant smokestack, they are exposed to a lime, or limestone, solution that is sprayed in their path. Sulphur dioxide in the gases reacts with the spray and goes into solution and is subsequently extruded in the form of sludge. Although attractive and ingenious in principle, scrubbing is difficult in practice, for it depends on the successful maintenance of a large-scale chemical reaction in a seventy-foot-long test-tube under conditions of varying load and changing weather. And it is also an expensive process.

Because of these facts, and because also of the wide regional differences in levels of air pollution and of sulphur content in locally mined coal which prevail throughout Amer-

ica, pragmatic environmental management would suggest a flexible approach to the sulphur problem, with pollution targets and preferred cleansing technologies varying from region to region. But Ackerman and Hassler maintain that the reverse happened. A uniform national target for sulphur-based pollutants was set, and the EPA developed an obsessive predilection for the expensive, unreliable and unpoliceable scrubbing technology.

The outcome was highly "counter-intuitive". The EPA began forcing utilities to scrub their stack gases at a cost of tens of billions of dollars. The cost would perhaps not be so bad if this vast programme turned out to be effective in reducing sulphur pollution. But Ackerman and Hassler maintain that, in fact, the EPA's efforts will make the overall problem worse rather than better in some of the country's most populous

regions, especially in the eastern States. And they argue that all the environmental gains promised by the EPA could be obtained more cheaply, more quickly and more surely by more intelligent and flexible regulation.

Why this should be so is a long and complicated story, but its essence is that the interaction of American legislative, bureaucratic and economic systems threw up an unlikely alliance between environmentalists and eastern, high-sulphur coal producers which forced Congress and the EPA to become obsessed by the scrubbing process. To summarize it thus inevitably makes *Clean Coal/Dirty Air* appear to be an investigation of a conspiracy. But in fact Ackerman and Hassler do not interpret their cautionary tale in this way.

For their main point is that the sulphur-emission saga can be ex-

plained not in terms of the mendacity or stupidity of individuals or of agencies, but in terms of organizational design.

They believe that the problem was largely caused by the creation of a Federal agency which was not firmly based on the use of scientific expertise, nor independent of detailed political and judicial supervision.

Ackerman and Hassler clearly believe that an older "New Deal-type" of agency would have handled the sulphur problem in a more flexible and effective manner. Whether this judgment is correct or merely the product of the legal romanticism of the Yale Law School (in which both authors teach) is hard to say. In the meantime, their fellow-citizens in the eastern United States will just have to learn to live with sulphur dioxide and its noxious chemical consequences.

Gordon Baker, unlike most of the other contributors, is genuinely concerned with understanding and expounding what Wittgenstein wrote, and in the course of his general survey of the point and intended force of Wittgenstein's remarks about "rule-following" and "going on in the same way" he asserts many sensible and not-widely-recognized truths about the later philosophy. He acknowledges the abstractness and necessary over-simplifications in his paper while, rightly, stressing that Wittgenstein's importance lies in his refusal to a remarkable degree to let his own thought process almost inevitably over-simplifications that lead to philosophical perplexity. The warning is not always heeded in the rest of the volume, and not even always by Baker himself, who ends by launching a largely undocumented broadside on Wittgenstein's behalf against "the whole framework of controversy in the philosophy of language... common to the work of Quine, Davidson, Dummett, Chomsky and generative semanticists". It cannot be said that Baker succeeds in his attack, as Christopher Peacocke points out in his reply. But on the interpretation of Wittgenstein's text, which Peacocke concentrates on, it is not always easy to determine exactly what his criticisms of Baker amount to. When he attributes positive philosophical doctrines or theories to Wittgenstein I think Baker is usually much closer to the truth.

Crispin Wright, after laying out some very general and abstract considerations about the application of expressions, goes on to argue that Wittgenstein's work repudiates the idea that a speaker "implicitly" knows a theory of meaning for the language. Wright is a necessary part of any philosophically interesting theory of meaning. No doubt there is an important truth about Wittgenstein lurking here, but I do not think the two parts of Wright's paper are closely enough linked to bring out the precise source and power of any such Wittgensteinian point. Gareth Evans, in the most detailed and most forceful paper in the volume, tries to explain in respectable observable terms the difference between a speaker who "implicitly" knows one theory of meaning for his language and another who "implicitly" knows another, extensionally equivalent, theory for the same language. The paper is a valuable contribution to current debates in the philosophy of language, but its considerable merits have little to do with the study of Wittgenstein, except that Evans here produces one determinate target for the considerations about rule-following to be directed against, if indeed they were

Aiming at the truth

By Barry Stroud

STEVEN H. HOLTZMAN and
CHRISTOPHER M. LEICH (Editors):
Wittgenstein: To Follow a Rule
250pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul.
£12.50.
0 7100 0760 4

It is easy to get the impression that Wittgenstein's work in the last third of his life goes against, and was meant to go against, a great deal of what is now being done in academic philosophy. That impression could be fully articulated and confirmed only by a correct exposition of Wittgenstein's later philosophy and a careful, informed application of its most important insights to recent developments in philosophy. This volume, a series of papers and replies delivered at a conference in Oxford in 1979, concentrates more on the second task than on the first. It is therefore difficult to know to what extent Wittgenstein's actual views are being deployed with precision and force against targets they were meant to attack. On the whole I would say they are not. That in itself is no criticism of the book, except perhaps of its title, since it nevertheless offers us good essays by some of the very best of the middle generation of philosophers in Britain.

J. N. FINDLAY:
Kant and the Transcendental Object
A Hermeneutic Study
392pp. Clarendon Press: Oxford
0 19 82438 2

According to Kant our knowledge of the world, as given in perception and characterized by concepts, is constrained by the way our mind is organized and, consequently, by the structure which it imposes upon what is given to it. Because of these constraints we must, he argues, distinguish between the mind-dependent world of objective experience, which alone is knowable, and the mind-independent world. This latter world is nevertheless a legitimate topic of philosophical thinking, subject to the requirement of internal logical consistency and of consistency with any principles, if there are such, which, though not principles of logic, are yet necessary and universal. Kant claims not only to have discovered such principles, but also to have exhibited them in their systematic completeness. They include the mathematical principles which describe the spatio-temporal structure of objective experience and principles (for example, the principle of causality) which determine the concepts whose application confers objectivity on what is subjectively given, as well as the conditions of their correct application. Kant also holds that man is capable of knowing what he ought to do and free to do or not to do it. His theory of knowledge has thus two main aims; the first, which has been of overriding interest to most recent commentators, is the exhibition and justification of the necessary principles, conformity to which is a condition of commonsense and of mathematical or scientific knowledge.

The second aim, which is the central topic of J. N. Findlay's book, is to exhibit and justify what can be legitimately thought about the mind-independent reality to which, as he rightly emphasizes, Kant usually refers by "three... sometimes divergent", namely those of the transcendental object, of Noumenon and of Thing-in-itself. Since legitimate thought about what transcends objective experience must be consistent with what is necessarily true of that experience, Professor Findlay also examines Kant's performance of his first main task. Again, since a great and influential thinker's mature thought often becomes clearer by tracing its development, by considering it in the context of his intellectual tradition and in the context of our own time, Findlay also deals with Kant's early writings, as well as with the philosophers who influenced him and recent philosophers whom he has influenced. Findlay is not content to explain what he takes to

be Kant's genuine doctrine, but also undertakes the defence of Kantian theses which he judges to be true and important. The result is a thoughtful book on all aspects of Kant's philosophy. In a brief review one can, at best, hope to present only a bird's-eye view of Findlay's approach. To this end a few, necessarily very sketchy, examples will be given and arranged in order both of increasing exegesis and of increasing philosophical controversy.

Findlay is, I think, right in arguing that since on Kant's view the world of objective experience is subject to certain limitations from which the world in itself is free, it follows at the very least that there is such a world. In accepting this minimalist thesis of transcendental metaphysics, Findlay agrees with most philosophers, even those realists who hold that although the world in itself is in principle accessible to science, scientific knowledge can only converge upon actual knowledge without ever actually reaching it. Kant speaks throughout of the noumenal world as a world which, like the world of objective experience, consists of a plurality of entities, and is thus a world of separate noumena, not a noumenal whole. Findlay interprets Kant as clearly meaning what he says and agrees with him. Yet, while this interpretation is generally accepted, it may be noted that Schopenhauer, for example, judged the thesis of a plurality of noumena to be inconsistent with Kant's theory of objective experience, since according to this theory the concepts of unity and plurality and their application belong

to the constraints of objective experience. This question whether Kant's noumenal pluralism follows from his account of objective and of moral experience, whether it is merely consistent with it or whether it is inconsistent with it, is well worth examining, not only because the thought-possibility of the world as a somehow ultimately indivisible whole has been defended by some philosophers, theologians and mystics, but also because it has recently been offered by physicists as a solution of certain conceptual difficulties in quantum mechanics.

Findlay's interpretation of Kant's theory of the noumenal world is, however, much more specific and controversial. Findlay follows the noted German Kantian scholar Adickes in interpreting Kant as holding that the noumenal world somehow (extra-temporally and, hence, not after the fashion of common sense or scientific causality) "affects" a subject's experience of objects and that this affection implies a thoroughgoing correlation between the objects as given to perception and characterized by concepts on the one hand and the noumena on the other. Findlay agrees with Adickes's view and blames Kant for not having made this metaphysical doctrine sufficiently clear, and for not acknowledging its origin in the writings of his rationalist predecessors.

Findlay accuses Kant of a "great deal of brash writing in the *Critique of Pure Reason*", and of making "an exaggerated repudiation of the magnificent metaphysical tradition" in which he grew up and

would avoid the relativism and acquiescence apparently involved in a Winch-like position while retaining the idea that other cultures cannot be understood in neutral, "value-free", even broadly functionalist, terms. This independent and very interesting illustration and development of some of the issues discussed by McDowell and Blackburn gives a pleasing unity to the second half of the book even though Taylor refrains from commenting on any of the views of Wittgenstein. Unfortunately he calls his own position "realism", and that is apparently what leads Philip Pettit into eighteen pages of taxonomy of possible forms of "realism" and "anti-realism" in general and of their moral species in particular. Such warm-up exercises, so characteristic of recent Oxford philosophy, seem especially idle in this case. On all essential points Pettit agrees with Taylor.

"which is always in the background of his thought".

It is not uncommon for those who have undergone a conversion to be particularly forceful in rejecting their earlier views. Findlay has come to reject as serious errors both his former conviction that knowing resembles making and his former conviction that Kant held such a "constructivist" or "idealist" view. Now the thesis that the self which discerns a certain spatio-temporal and conceptual structure in its objective experience has somehow (extra-temporally) made it, is like the thesis of the (extra-temporal) affection of this experience by noumena, far from being transparently clear. But Findlay does, I think, go too far, when he sees "moral as well as intellectual error" in any opinions "which assimilate knowledge to making" since they "tend to destroy the deep respect for existent fact... without which man cannot be decent or courageous". Surely, many kinds of making — eg the productions of craftsmen, the work of artists, even the creation of the universe by Leibniz's God — cannot but respect some unmade, prior limitations and need involve neither immorality nor moral weakness. Such polemic exaggerations should not detract from the philosophical and stylistic merits of the work. They might even add to the latter by conjuring up the very human picture of a philosopher whose passionate devotion to what he judges to be an important truth makes him lose his temper with anybody whom he regards as deviating from it.

Means and ends

By Kathleen Lennon

NEIL COOPER:
The Diversity of Moral Thinking
303pp. Clarendon Press: Oxford
0 19 82442 1

Moral judgments have normative "direction of fit": to accept them is to be committed to trying to make the world the way they say it ought to be. They express our "reflective desires", desires we want ourselves to have and others to share. Such an account of the "logic" of morality is not, of course, new and Neil Cooper concludes from it that what has often been established before, namely that moral judgments cannot be true or false, for they are not concerned with attempting to represent the world correctly.

The stiffness of this conclusion has been challenged by many recent writers who argue that the role that our moral beliefs play in the direc-

tion of our action is a consequence of the view of the world which they reflect. Cooper, however, is concerned to show that despite the fact that moral judgments lack "truth value" they can be used in reasoning and can be open to rational assessment. For him, individual moral judgments have a property analogous to truth, which enables them to be used in reasoning, in virtue of the existence of "fundamental moral principles" which are neither true nor false. A simpler account would result from the recognition that a Tarski-style truth definition can be given for moral judgments which would validate their use in argument without involving us in the more substantial claim that they are "getting the world right".

In assessing the rationality of alternative moralities Cooper relies heavily on the view that to believe an end valuable is to want others to adopt it. It is therefore "rational" to adopt a morality which is both logically and empirically possible for others to conform to, for them to want, and for us to teach them. Here there seems an odd reversal, for though a

consequence of believing something to be of value is commonly a desire that others should perceive its value and help promote it, it is not clear that a criterion of "rationality" is one we should adopt when deciding on our values.

Mr Cooper concludes the book with an argument for the rationality of altruism for self-interest's sake, which has a familiar ring. In the form the gives it derives from the claim that in many ways the human condition is like that of the Prisoner's Dilemma, with certain additions which make a rational solution possible. This requires that we are often in situations together with others, of having ends which can only be achieved if we each give up acting self-interestedly and can rely on others to do the same. If we take advantage of the altruism of others on one occasion by "free-riding" then they will not act cooperatively with us in the future. However, the only conclusion to draw from this is that we should not "free-ride" unless we can do it in secrecy; and this shows the arbitrariness of arguing for altruism purely on grounds of self-interest.

Seeing the wood

By Scott Leathart

N. D. G. JAMES:
A History of English Forestry
339pp. Blackwell. £19.50.
0 631 12495 0

It is easy to imagine the howls of anguish which would reverberate round the country if the present tracts of forest were to be sold to all dogs larger than Jack Russell owned by persons living in the New Forest should be maimed by the drawing of their claws to prevent them chasing the royal deer. But such was the obsession of the Norman kings with hunting that this was one of the many savage laws brought in by them to protect the deer and other "beasts of the chase" from the attentions of their subjects. Consequent upon this prime aim was the necessity to protect the trees amongst which the game dwelt. Thus began a system of forest laws controlling the management of trees — the practice of forestry — which has evolved over the centuries covered by this patiently researched book.

Although in medieval times timber had to meet a great many uses later met by coal and iron, there was no real shortage. Interference by the weather, such as the Great Gale of 1222 which blew down vast tracts of forest, and the exceptionally severe winters of 1436 and 1542 which made unusually heavy demands upon the fuel-wood supplies, gave occasional cause for concern; and even prompted the authorities to introduce elementary management techniques such as enclosing areas to exclude grazing animals to give tree seedlings a chance to prosper. The shortage began in Tudor times, when England was becoming a trading nation and being girt by the sea, in need of ever more ships. Some idea of the escalating demands of the shipbuilding industry upon the mainly oak forests can be gained from the fact that in Henry VIII's time the Royal Navy's tonnage was 12,445, while in the reign of George II it had risen to 321,104 tons. A 74-gun ship would swallow up 2,000 well-grown trees, and such were the ravages of decay that a ship of this size would last only twelve years before an extensive refit became necessary.

In the best English tradition, inquiry followed inquiry as to how the shortage of timber might be overcome. Eventually it was deemed imperative to have 100,000 acres of forest under systematic management to produce a constant supply, but surveys found little more than 60,000 acres of suitable forest or land capable of raising it. However, as has often happened in our history, we were saved by the bell: the ironclad ships arrived just in time. At first the Admiralty was reluctant to concede any merit in these novelties but in 1862, during the American Civil War, an ironclad, the Merrimack, took on two wooden ships and sank

them both, their guns being totally ineffective against the Merrimack's armour. The days of wooden ships were numbered and the future shape of forestry transformed.

Although the main concern of the authorities had been the state of the Crown forests and their inability to supply the timber needed, due to over-exploitation and bad management, many private owners, a class which had become increasingly rich as the country prospered, became anxious to improve their properties and were taking a great interest in their woods. New trees, such as larch, spruce and fir, were introduced from Europe and new management techniques, described by John Evelyn in the paper read by him to the new Royal Society in 1662, adopted. For 200 years these landowners prospered by supplying part of the shortfall in timber supply which, lack of management in the Crown forests had caused.

It was something of a paradox that the arrival of the ironclads and the consequent lessening of demand upon the oak forests should lead not to their regeneration but to their decay. For the ease with which timber could be imported in these new levathans made its growing unnecessary and thus unprofitable. The woodlands, for the most part, became little more than sporting pre-

serves, with the gamekeeper, not the forester, calling the tune. Yet there were landowners who, despite this discouragement, saw the importance of forestry to the future of the country, and clubbing together in such organizations as the Royal Forestry Society (the centenary of which falls this year and to which this book is dedicated) sought to manage their woods with prudence, taking advantage of the newly discovered north-west American trees, such as Douglas fir and Sitka spruce, to increase the production of their plantations. So, when the 1914 war cut off the import of the timber vital for working the coal-mines upon which the whole war effort depended, there was a home-grown supply available, albeit at the expense of 450,000 acres felled.

In 1919, in the aftermath of this devastation, the Forestry Commission was born, with the remit to build up the nation's forestry estate and create a reserve of timber to meet future emergencies. This task they had scarcely begun when Hitler struck. Again, private woodlands, nurtured by enthusiastic owners with expertise provided by the Commission and the universities' forestry schools, came to the rescue and 500,000 acres went under the axe.

The past forty years have seen a great increase in private woodlands

managed under agreed practices and thus eligible for grants and tax concessions administered by the Forestry Commission, which has itself greatly expanded its estate. Wide-ranging forest research, an expansion of forestry education, improved marketing arrangements and the establishment of forestry companies and co-operatives have all helped to make our forests much more productive and better able to meet the world timber shortage which many predict is not far off. Coupled with the increase in planting and production there has been a much greater public interest in forestry and in the amenities which it can provide. Forest walks and drives, nature reserves, picnic and camping-sites are just some of the places in the forests which millions of people visit every year. If the stated target of five million acres of managed forest can be reached by 2025 then perhaps we shall see again in Britain something of the forestry tradition, long since lost in our history but never extinguished in the more heavily wooded European countries.

N. D. G. James, a past president of the Royal Forestry Society and a land agent with a special love of forestry for over forty years, has traced the history of his subject with his usual thoroughness and has done English forestry a great service.

Running into people

By James Hunter

HAMISH BROWN:
Hamish's Greats End Walk
One Man and his Dog on a Hill
Route through Britain and Ireland
301pp. Gollancz. £9.95.
0 575 03029 1

Walking the length of Britain is nothing new. Ever since the early 1960s, when the indefatigable Dr Barbara Moore became something of a celebrity as a result of her repeated tramps from John O'Groats to Land's End, the task has been accomplished many times. A book as substantial as Hamish Brown's account of his own north-south traverse of the country can be justified only by his having done it differently.

Unlike most marathon walkers, Hamish Brown, a former teacher who now earns his living by writing and lecturing about the outdoor life, avoided roads and, with the exception of a short spell in an aged canoe as long as geography made that possible. His route lay through the North-West Highlands, the Scottish Southern Highlands, the Pennines and the Welsh mountains — though it also included a diversionary jaunt across the less familiar Wicklow Mountains

and the Macgillyuddy Reeks in the Irish Republic.

Hamish's *Greats End Walk's* daily diary entry format, which tends to overwhelm the reader in a stream of month-long succession of virtually identical breakfasts, lunches and suppers, is an unnecessary obstacle in the way of Brown's generally enjoyable style. But one forgives him his monotonously repetitive breakfasts and his endless getting-ups and going-to-beds. His 2,500-mile trek in the company of his Shetland Collie, Storm, has produced some excellent and thoughtful evocations of the British Isles' wilder and more lonely places. That is where Brown is most at home. "My heart's in the Highlands," he writes. And the comparative small proportion of his book devoted to the Pennines and the English South-West serves to confirm an overall impression that he regards travel in England as simply a necessary penance imposed by the Creator's unfortunate failure to link Scotland directly with Wales.

As long as Brown has a misty Celtic summit to himself and his dog, he is a happy man. It is when he is obliged to mingle with the common variety of holiday hiker and ramblers that he begins to grumble, complain and generally take himself a little bit too seriously. For he suffers from that unpleasant brand of open-air elitism which would bar the hills to all but a select minority. In one part of the otherwise despatched Highlands, he reports, he had the

misfortune to "run into people". Their presence prompted the quite remarkable thought: "The National Trust for Scotland are great sinners in this regard, developing and encouraging people to their mountain properties. There is a lot more of the same. The 'people' quickly turn into 'mobs'. Encountered on the Pennine Way, they are 'massed ranks'. And the very existence of a signposted and well-frequented path through the mountains of Northern England, observes Mr Brown, 'struck me as all wrong'.

An author is entitled to his opinions. But there is something more than a trifle hypocritical about writing a book with the object of making money from the public while arguing simultaneously that most of that public should be kept off the mountains which the book describes so well and so enticingly. Of Hamish Brown's affection for the hills there is no doubt. But his gratuitous denigration of so many of the people whom he encountered in the course of his long walk detracts from an otherwise fine travelogue.

The emphasis in Dmitri Kasterline's *England and the English* (144pp, including 35 colour and 50 black and white photographs. World's Work £9.95, 0-437 08050-1) is on people; it includes portraits which range from hedgers, shepherds, country grave-diggers, ditchers, reed cutters and rat-catchers to stockbrokers, page-boys at the Ritz and the sixth-form English class at Radley College.

